

THE TIMES

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Treasury grabs £1bn defence windfall

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE EDITOR

THE Defence Secretary has been forced by the Treasury to hand over up to £1 billion in savings in spite of winning Cabinet approval for his new blueprint for the Armed Forces.

George Robertson has been told by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, that he has been blessed with a windfall of extra cash because of favourable exchange rates over the past 12 months and amended contracts overseas, and he wants the money returned to the Treasury coffers.

Mr Robertson told the Cabinet

Overseas Policy and Defence Committee, which last week approved his strategic defence review proposals, that he could save £500 million through a more efficient equipment procurement system and greater emphasis on tri-service training.

Mr Brown was not satisfied and demanded a cut of £2 billion in the defence budget. After a Cabinet argument, a compromise was reached. Mr Robertson would agree to a £1 billion savings package, the £500 million he had earmarked through efficiency measures and another £500 million to be handed over to the Treasury from the so-called exchange rate windfall. Ministry of Defence

sources said that, although Mr Robertson's budget had been cut, he had fought off the Chancellor's £2 billion demand. The cuts would not affect the implementation of the defence review proposals, which will be published on Wednesday.

The deal won by Mr Robertson also involves a compromise with the Foreign Office.

Robin Cook, who launched the strategic defence review with Mr Robertson last summer, emphasising that it was foreign policy-led, was angry over the Defence Ministry's plans to reduce the number of frigates and destroyers from 35 to 32.

The Foreign Secretary argued

that there was an increasing number of occasions when the Royal Navy was required to perform "defence diplomacy" missions around the world. HMS Cornwall, a frigate, was sent to Sierra Leone after the overthrow of the junta earlier this year for "humanitarian" reasons, and the same warship is now on vigil off Guinea-Bissau in West Africa.

To meet Mr Cook's concerns, next week's White Paper will make it clear that the MoD will devise a novel approach to deploying frigates on operational missions, largely through cutting down on the length of each patrol duty. The White Paper will also give a

reprieve for Rosyth dockyard in Fife, which lost out to Devonport Dockyard in the bid to refit all the Royal Navy's nuclear submarines, including the new Trident ballistic missile boats. Rosyth is to be given more submarine refit work up to 2003.

After another battle between Mr Robertson and the Treasury, the Cabinet has approved the number of nuclear "hunter killer" submarines to be cut from 12 to 10, but the reduction will be phased over five years. The Navy will also be allowed to have its full complement of five new Astute class submarines. Only three have been ordered.

The most significant part of the Defence White Paper will be the declaration by Mr Robertson that Britain will pursue a "national maritime strategy", scrapping the old continental military strategy, based on a concentration of troops in Germany.

The focus is to be on developing a capability to mount expeditionary forces to hotspots around the world. To this end the army is to have the capability for the first time to launch simultaneously two divisions, each with three brigades.

Mr Robertson has won the approval of the Cabinet to recruit 3,500 more soldiers for the Army's skilled services, such as Royal

Engineers, Royal Signals and logistics regiments. The Navy will get two larger aircraft carriers to replace the present three small carriers, the Territorial Army will be cut from 57,000 to 40,000, there will be more tri-service training, and more power assigned to the Permanent Joint Headquarters, based at Northwood, west London, further reducing the individual impact of the single services.

Gordon Brown is to announce details of the comprehensive spending review, setting government budgets for the next three years, on Tuesday, July 14.

Law tightened, page 2

Contrite Beckham asks to be forgiven

By RICHARD DUCE AND DANIEL MCGRORY

DAVID BECKHAM apologised publicly for jeopardising England's World Cup chances as he flew home with his team mates last night.

Minutes before the England squad arrived back on a Concorde, 23-year-old Beckham issued a statement saying he was deeply sorry.

He confessed: "This is without doubt the worst moment of my career." The Manchester United player managed a rueful smile for the crowd of about a thousand waiting to greet the team at Heathrow.

The loudest cheer was reserved for the youngest of the party, Michael Owen, who



A rueful David Beckham faced England fans as he left a British Airways Concorde at Heathrow last night

won a players' poll to sit in the cockpit as the Concorde, specially laid-on by British Airways, landed. The shy tournament hero learnt from the cockpit window waving a St George flag.

Fans may not easily forgive Beckham for being sent off at the start of the second half but the Prime Minister was among those saying the errant midfielder should not carry the blame for England's elimination by Argentina.

Beckham, said to be Britain's highest earning player at £8.1 million a year, said: "I will always regret my actions. I have apologised to the England players and management and I want every England supporter to know how deeply sorry I am." He was last night believed to be flying to Aberdeen to be with his Bosh Spice fiancée, Victoria Adams.

Tony Blair had earlier telephoned Glenn Hoddle, the England coach. He said England had a "mountain of courage and molehill of luck". The Prime Minister absolved Beckham, saying fans should remember the good things he had done during the tournament, adding: "I should think no one feels worse about it

than David Beckham does. He is obviously going to have to learn from that."

Tony Banks, the Sports Minister, also spoke up for the player saying: "I do not think Beckham needs to be reminded of what happened. He will be pretty sore about it."

Beckham's colleagues appeared to bear no grudges. The captain, Alan Shearer, said: "He apologised in the dressing room. There is no more he can do." Paul Ince - who with David Batty missed

a penalty in Tuesday's 4-3 penalty shoot-out defeat by Argentina - threw a protective arm around him as they boarded a coach at Heathrow.

Hoddle, last off the coach, waved to the crowd, shrugged his shoulders and mouthed: "We tried." He said that Beckham would learn.

The midfielder player's mother, Sandra, said tearfully: "He hasn't let us down, we are very proud of him."

Among BA workers at Heathrow attitudes were

slightly different. Tim Evans, 20, an apprentice engineer, echoed the voices of many saying: "I think Beckham has let the country down but the team did England proud and I am proud to be English."

On England's last night in France 98 there were more football-related arrests on this side of the Channel. Police in Essex, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Dorset were kept busy as fans spilled on to the streets from pubs and clubs. Of 15 Britons held in Saint-Etienne, only ten were arrested and so far only four have been charged.

According to unofficial figures, 23.7 million watched England's match in Britain - a record for an ITV programme. The audience peaked at 26 million during the penalty shoot-out.

OXFAM

77% of people believe that the economy is in a state of decline.

77% of people believe that the government is not doing enough to improve the economy.

77% of people believe that the country is heading for a recession.

Henman victory helps to revive sporting spirits

By JOHN GOODBODY AND DEBORAH COLLCUTT

TIM HENMAN revived the country's sporting spirits yesterday by becoming the first British man to reach the Wimbledon singles semi-final for 25 years.

Henman, the British No. 2, who is an avid follower of football and had seen England lose their World Cup quarter-final chance on television, delighted the Centre Court crowd with the ease of his straight sets victory over Petr Korda, the Czech No. 3 seed and reigning Australian Open champion. He said his 6-3 6-4 6-2 victory was probably the greatest result of his career.

The last British man to be a singles semi-finalist was Roger Taylor in 1973, when Wimbledon was boycotted by many leading players, whose association wanted a bigger say in the game. Taylor won £2,000 for reaching the last four, while Henman will receive £108,750. The last British champion was Fred Perry in 1936.

Tomorrow Henman will meet Pete Sampras, of the United States, the No. 1 seed



Henman triumphant

and four-times champion, in an attempt to become the first Briton to play in a mens' singles final since "Bunny" Austin in 1938.

British triumph, page 56

Trimble elected

David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist Party leader, was elected First Minister yesterday when the Northern Ireland Assembly met for the first time amid acrimonious exchanges. Page 2

Confidence in the economy plunges

By PETER RIDDELL AND ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE British public has become much gloomier about the outlook for the economy following a sharp deterioration in the past month, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

Dissatisfaction with the Government is also rising, but the poll, undertaken last weekend, shows that the Tories and William Hague have not benefited. Labour has maintained its huge poll lead.

Consumer worries were backed up by evidence yesterday showing that manufacturers are beginning to shed jobs at the fastest rate since the last recession.

The MORI economic optimism index, measuring the proportion thinking that the general economic condition of the country will improve rather than get worse over the next 12 months, now stands at minus 10 points, compared with plus one point in late May. This represents a big change compared with the average level of the index since the election. The current figure was last seen in the summer of 1995. Nearly two-fifths of the public (38 per cent) believe

Just do it, says Nike but teenagers say no thanks

By OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK AND SARAH CUNNINGHAM

NIKE yesterday revealed its first loss for 13 years as American teenagers ditch their trainers for more sophisticated footwear. Nikes, it seems, are no longer cool.

Parents are delighted. The peer pressure that once compelled their children to wear overpriced trainers is now dictating a switch to hiking-style boots.

Sports footwear did not take off as a street fashion until the 1980s, when it was adopted on stage by black American hip hop bands. The craze reached Britain the following year and trainers rapidly became the most popular footwear.

Now teenagers are turning to Timberlands, Hush Puppies or Caterpillars, although the price tags of more than £60 are just as breathtaking.

The unexpected change in tastes has sent Wall Street quaking in its brogues. Sales are plummeting even though Nike shoes are being advertised by Michael Jordan, America's most popular sportsman, and Ronaldo, the Brazilian footballer.

The shoes, which cost £50 or more in the shops, cost only 46p to make in factories in



Once de rigueur, the trainer is being usurped by hiking-style boots



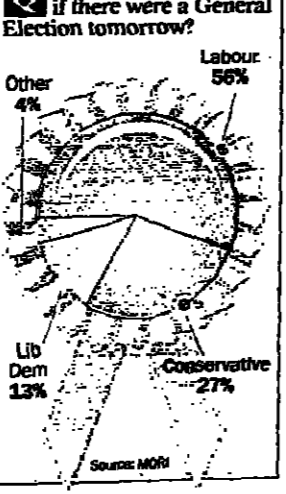
China and £1.19 in Thailand. Human rights campaigners, who have criticised Nike for employing "slave labour", will be delighted at the company's declining fortunes.

than \$3 billion in annual sales. Five years later, that figure had more than doubled and last year it was \$9 billion. Now the company is setting aside \$130 million, plunging it \$67 million in the red, to pay for 1,600 redundancies.

Total sales of sports footwear have been falling since reaching a peak at the end of 1995. Philip Armitage, a sociologist, summed it up: "Trainers are now considered outhouse wear for the young. A lot of parents will be relieved about that."

The *Face* magazine says: "Smart shoes are the way to walk this year," while another style magazine, *i-D*, told its fashion-conscious readers: "Flashy silver trainers are being overlooked in favour of rugged, subtly shaded action shoes."

Traditional shoemakers such as Britain's family-owned Clark's have found themselves back in fashion, with bands such as The Verve wearing their Wallabee shoes and desert boots also appearing on the feet of pop stars such as Liam and Noel Gallagher of Oasis.



conditions will get worse. Less than a fifth (19 per cent) think they will improve.

This sharp decline follows a further round of increases in interest rates, as well as announcements about redundancies and a generally more pessimistic tone of media comment about the economy. Consumer spending has also come off the boil, while the Halifax house price index today

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Peter Riddell, page 12
 Joblessness rises, page 30

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Late substitute made as Tone the Goal is recalled to bench

PHONEY Tony is a dangerous phrase. Yesterday the dream-makers who manage the Blair message and know the danger did a U-turn. Football was dropped. Before lunch it was "Tone the Goal". By Prime Minister's Questions it was the NHS again. He had been all over the airwaves that morning, adopting his "Diana" voice for solemn commiserations with the England team. The demeanour was toe-curling, the metaphor unspeakable. "A mountain of courage and a

mohehill of luck," he intoned. Mr Blair, who is presumably no more interested in football than most busy politicians, had plainly been pointed in this direction by his media-manipulators (now called "strategic message coordinators"); but, as often happens with newcomers to a passion, seemed unable to grade his response. By early afternoon Blair must have been being warned that he had gone over the top. "Return to base" was the new message. "Cancel football".

And so it happened that by the time we reached questions the small band of government backbenchers who had been recruited and coached to question him (the whole occasion is now choreographed) had been firmly pointed away from last night's match. "No football" was the order. Nary a mention. And Mr Blair did well. He even managed not to mention the late Princess of Wales, answering a question placed reverentially before him by Lindsay Hoyle (Lab, Chorley) like

some small offering to a Greek god—about Diana, the anniversary of her birthday, and the possibility of legislation on landmines. Blair promised the legislation and steered clear of the birthday. Peter Lilley, standing in for William Hague, asked him to admit he had given the House incorrect information last week about applications to Scottish universities — and Blair actually admitted it. Unfortunately Mr Lilley wasn't listening and ploughed into his prepared follow-up — "Why won't he answer?" — which Blair just had. Poor Mr Lilley. A mountain of preparation and a molehill of agility. □ Yesterday this sketch re-



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

ported an MP's suggestion that Anemrin Bevan, architect of the NHS 50 years ago, was treated in a private ward during his final illness. Sir Peter Tapsell (C, Louth & Horncastle) said so, though not critically. There was a shout of "lies!" from Labour. A lady who was there and ought to know has telephoned me. Her account disproves the story yet explains how it arose. Reports that appeared in the press at the time, suggesting Bevan had been treated as a private patient,

were wrong. But he was treated like a private patient. Bevan was admitted to the Royal Free Hospital in London on December 29, 1959, with a terminal illness. His physician was Sir Daniel Davies and he was operated on, under the NHS, by the surgeon Rodney Mingot. Bevan was placed in a three-bed public ward but that was kept free of other patients for the duration of his illness (some weeks). His wife, Jennie Lee, also insisted that the lift be kept free, which (the ward

being the third floor) exasperated those who had to walk. To maintain a measure of anonymity, Bevan was entered under the name "Peter Davies". Flowers were addressed to Peter Davies. A vagrant from nearby Rowton House, also called Peter Davies, was there too. Flowers meant for Bevan were placed around him. When the poor man, who was confused, came round to find himself surrounded by blossoms, he thought he had died and awoken in paradise.

Blair ready to intervene over Orange march

By MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR is being pressed by Northern Ireland's leaders to make an emergency visit today to try to avert a conflagration over the Orange Order's Drumcree parade on Sunday. Sources close to the Prime Minister said that he stood ready to make yet another direct intervention to prevent the peace process being derailed. His diary could be cleared quickly and he was expected to make a decision this morning. The pressure on Mr Blair was believed to have come from David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist Party leader, Seamus Mallon, the SDLP deputy leader and Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein president. On the day that the Province's new Assembly met for the first time, sources also disclosed that London, Dublin and Washington were making strenuous top-level efforts to persuade both sides in the Drumcree dispute to agree that a small parade should pass along Portadown's predominantly nationalist Garvaghy Road in the least provocative manner. To clinch such a deal Mr Trimble could, for the first time, talk directly to the nationalist residents' leaders in his new role as Northern

Ireland's First Minister, probably in the company of Mr Mallon, who was yesterday elected Second Minister. Mr Trimble said he would "consider what's the best thing for me to do", but was not going to engage in "some sort of ego trip". Mr Mallon vowed to "leave no stone unturned" in the search for a solution, but cautioned that the parties might lack the necessary influence with the marchers and protestors. The Assembly began life with electric exchanges as hardline Unionists and republicans finally came face to face, and the election of Mr Trimble and Mr Mallon, John Hume, the SDLP's leader and chief architect of the peace process, was expected to become Second Minister, but opted out at the last moment because of his heavy workload. Mr Trimble has a good relationship with Mr Mallon and the two men are expected to form a formidable partnership as Northern Ireland seeks to put its bloody past behind it. The Assembly's inaugural meeting produced scenes that were until recently unthinkable as Northern Ireland's political leaders, former terrorists, victims of terrorism and the rest of the 108-strong

body came together in a single chamber. The Rev Ian Paisley and other hardline Unionists confronted Sinn Fein directly, and there were furious exchanges. Looking directly at Mr Adams, Mr Paisley spoke of those "murdered by his cohorts, the families that were torn apart, the people who were smashed and turned into vegetables by IRA violence". Martin McGuinness, the Sinn Fein MP, accused Mr Paisley of refusing to attend the peace talks but "trundling into this room now because you're afraid you're going to be left behind". In attacking Sinn Fein, Mr Paisley and his allies were really attacking Mr Trimble for daring to deal with that party. An attempt to divide the UUP by demanding a commitment Sinn Fein would not be admitted to the Cabinet without IRA disarmament failed, with all 30 UUP members backing their leader. Sinn Fein abstained. The hardliners' attacks contrasted strongly with the tone of speeches by Mr Trimble, Mr Mallon and other members of what has become a *de facto* alliance between the UUP and the SDLP.



Gerry Adams listens as Ian Paisley speaks at the first meeting of the Assembly

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tories cut jobs and offices to save £3m

Tory chiefs last night agreed to cut spending by £3 million a year and shed up to 50 jobs in an attempt to stave off financial ruin. The most drastic cuts in 40 years were set out in a report drawn up by Archie Norman, the deputy party chairman, who is head of the supermarket chain Asda. They were agreed without dissent by the Shadow Cabinet last night in the absence of William Hague, who is still recovering from ill-health. "We were warned either accept the cuts or face the fact that we will be a spent fighting force forever," one member of the Shadow Cabinet said. Mr Norman is also restructuring the party political headquarters to try to match the efficiency of the Labour Party. The first jobs will disappear within a week. Regional offices in London, Leeds, Bury, Hinkley, Exeter and Cobham, Surrey, will be closed and party officials will be forced to work from home.

Defeat over Wales Bill

The Government last night suffered its 24th defeat in the House of Lords since coming to power when peers voted by 113 to 94 to ban ministers becoming members of the Welsh assembly. Although the move was a blow to Ron Davies, the Welsh Secretary, who is hoping to head the assembly, officials insisted the defeat would be overturned when the Government of Wales Bill returns to the Commons. The vote was on a Tory backbench amendment by Lord Crickhowell, a former Welsh Secretary, during the Bill's report stage.

Governors lose powers

The governing body of a comprehensive school was stripped of its powers after a scathing inspectors' report highlighted poor standards of work and behaviour. Herefordshire County Council took control of the budget at Haywood High School, Hereford, and launched an inquiry into claims that children and teachers were verbally and physically abused. The council, which was formed just three months ago, has also suspended the deputy head teacher. The head is on sick leave.

Peace camp eviction

Anti-nuclear campaigners at Britain's oldest peace camp were last night preparing for a long siege after unexpectedly losing their fight against eviction. The campers, who have occupied the narrow grass verge on the A814 opposite Faslane nuclear submarine base on the Clyde for 16 years, now have two weeks to prepare for the arrival of Argyl and Bute Council's bulldozers. Its lawyers went to Paisley Sheriff Court and successfully overturned an earlier court ruling which had blocked the eviction move in April.

Nuclear report 'sensitive'

A damning report on safety standards at the Dounreay nuclear processing plant was not seen by John Battle, the Energy Minister, until after the Government had agreed to take a consignment of radioactive waste from Georgia. Mr Battle told members of the Commons Trade and Industry Select Committee that publication of the report had been prevented by the UK Atomic Energy Authority on the grounds that it contained commercially sensitive material about operations at Dounreay.

Runaway coach halted

Schoolchildren escaped with cuts and bruises yesterday when their coach ran out of control on a hill and came to rest with its front wheels hanging over a three-metre drop to the sea. Howard Marsden, 44, the driver, slowed the coach by scraping it along a wall for more than 100 metres. The accident happened at Lythe Bank, near Whitby, North Yorkshire. Emergency workers said that the 43 children, from Hunscliffe comprehensive in Saltburn-by-the-Sea, Redcar, had been saved from serious injury by their seatbelts.

Free peaches at Asda

The Asda supermarket chain is to give away 100,000 small peaches in protest at EU rules which ban them from going on sale after July 1 each year. Asda said that after a poor harvest growers and stores needed to sell as much fruit as possible to meet demand but were hampered by the inflexibility of the law. Stores will be giving away the small peaches to children this Saturday. A spokesman for the EU Commission in London dismissed Asda's protest as a publicity stunt.

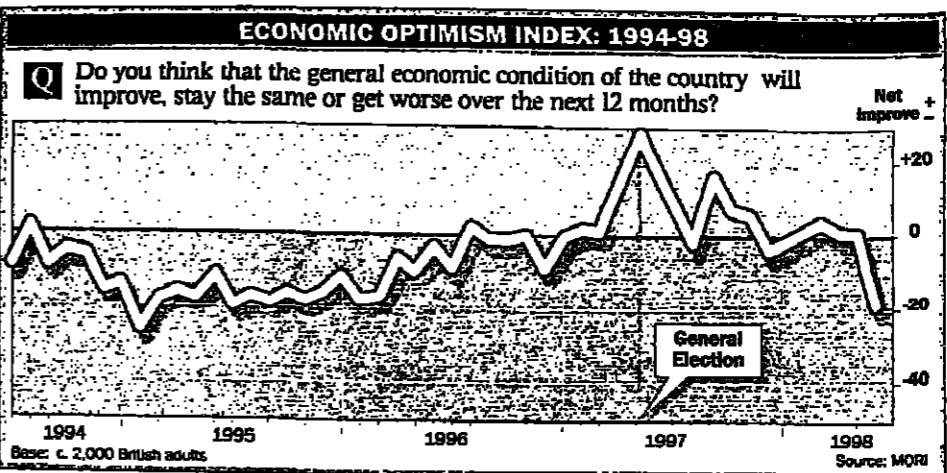
Law on electronic exports tightened

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE EDITOR

MINISTERS are planning to prevent information on sensitive military technology being transferred through the Internet, by e-mail or fax, a White Paper on strategic export controls disclosed yesterday. The new legislation, which is not expected to be introduced for some time because of the weight of pressing parliamentary business, will make it obligatory to have an export licence to transfer documents about sensitive military or dual-use technology to foreign customers, "whether exported physically or in electronic form". Lord Clinton-Davies of Hackney, the Trade Minister responsible for exports, said yesterday it was "absurd" that the Government could control only the physical transfer of goods and not sensitive transfers by electronic mail. Barbara Roche, a junior Trade and Industry Minister, said: "The clear message is that the Internet is not a legal-free zone." Once the legislation is in place, people caught transferring sensitive high technology abroad on the Internet, or by e-mail or fax without a licence will face prosecution, mainly by Customs and Excise. The White Paper was published in response to the criticisms contained in the report by Sir Richard Scott in 1996, after the arms-to-Iraq inquiry. Although the previous Government issued a consultation paper, the election came before further action was possible. It is also proposed that a new law be drafted to stop British nationals either at home or abroad from selling prohibited arms or brokering arms deals between foreign countries that are the subject of weapons embargoes. The White Paper also promises more openness and greater parliamentary scrutiny of arms licences.

Confidence in the economy plunges

Continued from page 1 confirms a further slowdown in price rises, a sure sign that consumers are losing confidence in the economy. The Purchasing Managers Survey showed yesterday that manufacturing employment was falling at a rate not seen since 1993. A separate report from the Institute of Directors yesterday revealed a dramatic slump in business confidence in the last few months, while a survey by Reed Accountancy showed that almost half of finance directors believe the economy will move into recession before the end of the year. MFI, the furniture company, announced earlier this week that it would lay off 1,500 workers, while Dawson, the leather group, which owns the Pringle brand, said it was shutting two factories with the loss of more than 720 jobs. Mr Blair reacted angrily in the Commons yesterday to Tory charges about a sharp rise in business failures this



year. Recalling the recession of the early 1990s, he said: "Those were the days of Tory boom and bust. We are not going back to those days." The public still prefers Labour over the Tories by an unprecedented margin for this stage of the parliament. Labour is now on 56 per cent, up one point since late May, with the Tories one point up at 27

per cent. The Liberal Democrats are one point down at 13 per cent. There is little consolation for Mr Hague who is recovering at home in Yorkshire from his recent operation. By a two-to-one margin (46 to 23 per cent), the public are dissatisfied rather than satisfied with his record as Tory leader. MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,760 adults at 148 sampling points across Britain between June 25 and 30. Data were weighted to match the profile of the population. Voting intentions exclude those who say they would not vote (10 per cent), are undecided (7 per cent) or who refused to say (1 per cent).

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Neighbour denies killing wealthy eccentric

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE neighbour of an eccentric millionaire found dead in his fume-filled car denied murdering him yesterday.

Lawrence Dabbs, a retired company director, was at first believed to have committed suicide. But an inquest jury has been asked to consider whether the 74-year-old reclusive was killed by those who could inherit his fortune.

John Hart Jr was set to receive more than £1 million from Mr Dabbs's will, which was changed a month before his death on September 13, 1996. After four hours of questioning by Peter Ashworth, the Derby and South Derbyshire Coroner, Mr Hart angrily denied being a killer.

Asked why he had sold the car in which Mr Dabbs had died, Mr Hart said in a raised voice: "I did everything for Lawrie. I did not kill him, no way, and no way did I help him to commit suicide. If there are any accusations against me, for God's sake say it."

Questioned by Aidan Marron, QC, for Derbyshire police, Mr Hart admitted forging Mr Dabbs's signature on cheques for £5,200 while he was in hospital. "I signed them because Lawrie said he couldn't do it. He told me to practise his signature. He wanted me to sign things for him."

The inquest has been told that, on August 29, doctors described Mr Dabbs a number of drugs, including the painkiller Nitrazepam. He was discharged a day later but within hours had fallen into a deep coma and was readmitted. Twenty-one tablets were missing from the bottle.

Mr Marron asked Mr Hart, who had spent most of the evening with Mr Dabbs, to explain how so many pills had disappeared. Mr Hart replied: "You are trying to suggest that I drugged him, but that's crap. After all, I took him to the hospital and told them I thought it was an overdose. Would I have done that if I had given him the tablets myself?"

The inquest continues.

RE teacher is exposed as Nick the Stripper



Robert Fraser, as his former pupils knew him

Double life ends as ex-pupil sees him in G-string, reports Simon de Bruxelles

A RELIGIOUS education teacher has been forced to resign after moonlighting as a stripper.

Robert Fraser, 46, says he took his clothes off in pubs and clubs because he could not afford to pay his mortgage on his £28,000-a-year teacher's salary. The married father of three daughters was earning an extra £1,000 a week when a former pupil saw him in his G-string and reported him to the school authorities.

Mr Fraser was head of the personal social education department at the 1,100-pupil Oakmead College of Technology in Bournemouth, where he had taught for 20 years. When the school day ended, he became Nick the Stripper, a no-holds-barred performer with a reputation for performing the "Full Monty".

He had been leading his double life for 18 months when staff at the school heard of his stripping act. At first he claimed that he was the victim of mistaken identity but was finally forced to resign after being recognised during a performance at a seaside pub.

Looking tanned and fit, Mr Fraser said yesterday: "There was nothing illegal, fraudulent or dishonest about what I was doing. If I had been a roofer or a bricklayer I am sure it would have been viewed very differently.

"I enjoy doing my act and, in a relatively joyless existence set against the background of teaching, it provided moments of happiness."

He said he had done the honourable thing by resigning but admitted trying to "flannel it" initially. "I accepted there was a moral contradiction in what I was doing and I was never quite able to resolve it."

As well as religious education, he was responsible for tackling issues such as drugs and alcohol awareness,



Fraser as Nick the Stripper in pubs and clubs

healthy lifestyles and vocational education with pupils aged between 11 and 19.

Mr Fraser, who described himself as the "life and soul of the staff room", said: "I had already decided to give up teaching because I was sick of the long hours, the stress and the overwork.

"Things began to go wrong when we moved to a bigger house. I took on a bigger mortgage and that turned out to be a nightmare. I tried various part-time jobs, including working in a garage, but I found myself running faster and faster just to stay in the same place and sometimes ended up doing 16 hours a day.

"It was quite stressful when I first started stripping, because I was so worried about being found out. I would search the room for any faces that I knew while I was doing my act, but in dark, crowded pubs it is difficult to see everyone."

He earns at least £45 for a half-hour session and may perform at three hen parties in an evening. Stripping pays almost twice as much as teaching. Asked if he stripped completely, Mr Fraser replied: "Yes, but I'm not proud of it."

Although income has risen, his naked ambition cost him his marriage. "I didn't tell my wife what I was doing to start with. She thought I was working or going out with friends," he said. "I moved out within 24 hours of her discovering my secret."

Peter Lawrenson, Oakmead's headmaster, who has just taken early retirement, said: "I'm extremely sorry that a man who had been such a good teacher has chosen to act in such a way."

But he was pleased prompt action had been taken to protect the reputation of the school and teachers.

Nick the Stripper earned an entirely different kind of reputation in the pubs of Bournemouth. One publican said: "One evening a group of girls got completely carried away and nicked his G-string. He ended up having to leg it stark naked across the car park."

The stripper's agent, Dave Woodbury, said: "Robert is quite an exhibitionist. He has no qualms about doing the Full Monty. He's happy to show the lot. He's the oldest stripper on our books, but he's a good mover and keeps himself in shape."

Jury sent home in Billie-Jo murder trial

BY JOANNA BAILE

THE jury in the Billie-Jo Jenkins murder trial was sent home for the night after failing to reach a verdict following five hours of deliberation yesterday.



Billie-Jo: attacked with metal tent peg

Billie-Jo's foster father, Sion Jenkins, denies bludgeoning her around the head with a heavy metal tent peg as she painted the patio doors of the family home in Hastings, East Sussex in February last year.

Before sending the jury out to consider the verdict yesterday morning, Mr Justice Gage reminded them: "The defence does not have to prove its theory, the prosecution must disprove that and prove its own."

Summarising the prosecution case, he said: "The prosecution say it's ridiculous to suggest that anyone else could have come in and attacked Billie-Jo in that time." He then pointed to the "extraordinary trip" that Mr Jenkins admitted making, to buy white spirit, which included two circuits of a park. The judge said that Mr Jenkins did this "without checking whether he had white spirit or money".

Mr Jenkins was found to have spots of blood on his clothing "consistent with being the assailant". The prosecution, he added, had said rejected defence evidence suggesting that the spots came from a bubble of blood in Billie-Jo's nose which burst as Mr Jenkins tended to her.

Summarising the defence

case, Mr Justice Gage said that counsel for Mr Jenkins had pointed out that Hastings was "an area where there is much crime". The police, according to the defence, did not investigate the murder properly "from the word go" and "failed to see the significance of blood in Billie-Jo's airways".

Mr Justice Gage said that, according to the defence, "the whole prosecution got off on the wrong foot and stayed there". The defence argued, he said, that you "cannot rule out the possibility that the spots were caused by the exhalation of blood".

The judge also said that the defence had emphasised that there was "no motive and no sufficient evidence" against Mr Jenkins.

The jurors will return this morning when, at their request, they will watch two videos made of Billie-Jo's body and of the murder scene.



Sion Jenkins denies murdering his foster daughter Billie-Jo, the natural daughter of Bill Jenkins, right

Christie 'is Frankenstein of the track'

LINFORD CHRISTIE was described yesterday as an "athletics Frankenstein" by the man he is suing for libel, John McVicar, who alleged in a magazine that Christie took performance-enhancing drugs, told a High Court jury that he believed the sprinter was "a typical athletics Frankenstein — a steroid-enhanced athlete".

The article appeared in *Spiked*, a now-defunct satirical magazine. Mr McVicar, who has represented himself in the case, said during his final speech: "There is a truth to my article which has stood up to the rigours of this trial." Performance-enhancing drugs were the "cancer of modern track and field athletics", and the testing designed to prevent their misuse was ineffective, he said.

Patrick Moloney, QC, counsel for W H Smith Ltd. The case continues.

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Widow inherits from husband she killed

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

A WOMAN convicted of killing her violent husband was told yesterday that she could inherit his wealth. Maria McDonald, 44, is expected to receive more than £100,000, including his half-share of their home, proceeds of his pension, life assurance policies and shares.

Mrs McDonald was found guilty of culpable homicide at the High Court in Edinburgh in November after she repeatedly stabbed her 49-year-old husband, Paul, at their cottage in Tarbet, near Loch Lomond, in April last year.

She had suffered years of drunken, violent abuse during the 13-year marriage and often had black eyes or clumps of hair missing. At her trial she told the court that she must have snapped, although she could not remember as she suffered from amnesia over the killing.

In view of the "unusual" circumstances, the judge decided not to jail her and put her on probation for two years. Yesterday her lawyers went to the Court of Session and obtained his consent to Mrs McDonald inheriting her husband's assets.

Her lawyers argued that in view of the circumstances, the forfeiture rule, which would normally prevent her as a convict from benefiting from the crime, should be modified. Lord Cowie agreed to grant the order, which was not opposed.

Without the court order, the assets would have passed to Mr McDonald's mother.

Mary Coyle, and his half-brother, David Jordan.

Mrs McDonald's has become one of a handful of cases in Scotland where an order has been made under the Forfeiture Act, allowing people to inherit in such circumstances. The first successful case in 1968 also involved a woman who had been placed on probation for killing her brutal husband.

Mrs McDonald, who was originally from Austria, moved to Scotland after marrying in 1984. Her husband worked on oil rigs as a technician and she opened a seasonal bed and breakfast guest house at their village home.

Their marriage ran into trouble and she was frequently forced to escape through a window and would end up sleeping in the garden shed, dog kennel or bushes for her own safety. An ambulance was called out for her five times. Once, police were called to the couple's home and found her hiding in the bushes.

Her husband's drinking eventually led to his dismissal and he returned to Tarbet, where he made his wife's life a "living hell", according to friends. When she killed him, she was said to be in a depressed state.

McDonald was originally charged with murder but the Crown accepted her admission to the reduced charge of culpable homicide after accepting that she had acted under provocation.

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مكتبة الأصيل

Handwritten notes and stamps on the right margin, including "Go to...", "ACHE", and "Would you refreshed and...".

Golden boy Owen has the world at his feet

By Stephen Farrell, Daniel McGrory and Lin Jenkins

MICHAEL OWEN was told last night that he could name his price as sponsors queued up to sign Britain's most coveted sporting hero.

While the 19-year-old with the squeaky-clean image was measuring his future in millions, David Beckham was counting the cost of his petulance. Marketing experts predict that Owen can make £10 million in endorsements in the next year.

Even before Concorde brought the England team home, faxes were flying to his agent, Tony Stephens, from soft-drink firms, breakfast cereal makers, car manufacturers and fashion houses. All of them said Owen could write his own cheque.

Mr Stephens was also busy engaged on a damage limitation exercise on behalf of another of his clients — Beckham. The 23-year-old Manchester United midfielder, who is engaged to the Spice Girl Victoria Adams, has just been named as Britain's top-earning player, estimated to be worth £8.1 million a year.

His deals with Adidas and Brylcreem are safe. Adidas, with whom he has a £3.5 million deal until 2004, said: "We do not condone David Beckham's reaction to the late challenge and no doubt he will regret what has happened. However, Beckham is an outstanding player. We will continue to support him."

Brylcreem, which pays him £1 million a year, said: "He is and will continue to be our Brylcreem Boy. We don't want to comment on his performance on the field."

Dave Davies, an agent for most of the England 1966 World Cup winners, said last night: "Beckham was a silly

boy because he had it all, the looks, the talent and the girlfriend. Sponsors will wonder about his international prospects, but clever advertisers may capitalise on the bad boy image."

Loyal fans yesterday clamoured to buy £3.25 Manchester United shirts bearing his name. A spokesman explained this was "a show of solidarity".

Beckham's parents last night stood by their son. His tearful mother, Sandra, said: "He hasn't let us down, we are very proud of him." Alongside her at the door of the family's terraced house in Chingford, northeast London, his father Ted said he didn't deserve to be sent off, adding: "David was so choked, he couldn't speak."

Owen still lives in the family home near Chester, with his parents, Jeanette and Terry, two brothers and two sisters, though he has bought a plot of land a mile away. Mrs Owen said: "We were on the edge of our seats. It was a very proud moment when I saw him score and he turned and smiled."

Rachel Anderson, a football agent, said: "For advertisers he is too good to be true — handsome, well-mannered, loyal to his schoolgirl sweetheart and a brilliant player. He can easily earn £10 million this year, but should take his time and wait for the most lucrative and prestigious deals."

The biggest marketing conundrum of all is whether Liverpool will sell him. A club spokesman said tersely: "No comment."

Dignity in defeat, page 23
Leading article, page 25
World Cup, pages 52-54, 56



Michael Owen, the sponsors' new idol, can name his price, while David Beckham's advertising value has suffered an overnight slump



IN BRIEF

Violent end to victory celebrations

More than 40 people were hurt as celebrations in Buenos Aires yesterday ended with fans fighting, looting shops and clashing with police (Gabriella Giamini writes). Police had to fire tear gas and charge the crowd around the capital's central obelisk, where tens of thousands had watched the game on giant screens.

Three people were killed and eight injured when their car was crushed by a train after it was trapped on a railway crossing by celebrating fans who refused to move.

100 arrests after pubs turn out

There were more than 100 arrests around the country as supporters left pubs and clubs. In some towns the disorder was the most serious since the tournament began. More than 40 people were arrested for public order and criminal damage offences in the West Midlands, and there were more than 35 arrests for drunk and disorderly behaviour in Sussex.

Record number watched on TV

Nearly 24 million people watched the game on television, setting a new record for a single sport programme. The audience peaked at 26 million during the penalty shoot-out, ITV said. At 23.7 million, the match is the third most popular British programme and ITV's most successful broadcast. The figures do not include the thousands who watched in pubs.

FA headquarters damaged by fire

A fire broke out at the Football Association's headquarters at Lancaster Gate, Central London, yesterday, causing smoke damage to most of the ground and first floors. All 50 staff escaped injury and trophies, including a replica of the World Cup won in 1966, were undamaged.

Adidas gives red card to Beckham ads

By Stephen Farrell

ADIDAS yesterday stopped a multi-million-pound television campaign starring David Beckham as he became its third player to be sent off in the World Cup.

For weeks Beckham's face has stared out from posters under the unfortunate slogan, "Historians, it is spelt B-E-C-K-K-H-A-M", while television has shown two advertisements in which he takes a free kick and is shown growing from a young boy into a "mature" player.

Last night an Adidas spokesman confirmed that both television advertisements had "run their course", but said that they were being withdrawn because of the team's early exit. "They were only scheduled to run as long as England were in the tournament. It is pointless having the ads on British television while England are no longer playing."

The German sportswear giant has

MICHAEL OWEN
Age: 19 Caps: 9
Salary: £15,000 a week, new 5-year contract at Liverpool. Eighteen months ago was earning £12,000 a year, now thought to be £750,000 a year.
Agent: Tony Stephens
Endorsements: Umbro - 6-year deal worth £5m, £1m bonus for being England's joint leading scorer in World Cup.
Tiscot watches - estimated £100,000 a year.
Estimated worth: £1.75m a year.
Girlfriend: Louise Bonsall (18).
Houses: Lives with mother, father, brothers and two sisters in Hawarden, Cheshire. Has bought plot of land 1 mile away on which to build a house.
Car: Golf GTI.

DAVID BECKHAM
Age: 23 Caps: 18
Salary: Estimated between £22,000 to £25,000 at Manchester United, with bonuses thought to be worth £1.35m a year. Trying to renegotiate basic salary.
Agent: Tony Stephens
Endorsements: Adidas - £500,000 a year. Contract worth £3.5m until 2004.
Brylcreem - £1m a year.
Pepsi - £200,000 a year.
Estimated worth: £8.1m a year.
Girlfriend: Victoria Adams (Posh Spice).
Houses: Temporary £300,000 flat in Alderley Edge, Cheshire, with £40,000 Harrods kitchen.
Car: Porsche Carrera 911 Turbo R reg. £85,000, metallic blue.

had an unfortunate World Cup, for which it paid £20 million to be an official sponsor. Its other star players were the Holland and AC Milan striker Patrick Kluivert, who was sent off for elbowing a Belgian defender;

the France and Juventus midfielder Zinedine Zidane, shown the red card for stamping on a Saudi player; and the Italy and Juventus striker Alessandro del Piero, who was injured before the World Cup, lost his regular

place in the starting line-up and has so far failed to score a goal.

All appear in the stylish and hugely expensive television campaign in which Kluivert is shown running away from a tidal wave and Zidane stares moodily at the futuristic Stade de France. All are promoting the £120 Predator Accelerator boot, which is said to allow its wearer to strike the ball — and presumably opposition player — with improved accuracy.

The experience echoes the "Curse of Nike" during the Barcelona 1992 Olympics, when the world's largest sportswear firm backed the Ukrainian pole-vaulter Sergei Bubka, American 200 metres runner Michael Johnson and Algeria's middle-distance runner Noureddine Morcelit for gold. All failed dismally in their individual events.

Adidas has had more success in its choice of teams in France 98, which include Germany and France, not to mention Argentina.

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A Save the Children plane delivering supplies in southern Sudan. Photo: Neil Cooper

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We're pressing for peace as the only long term solution to the problems in Sudan. But meanwhile, we're doing all we can.

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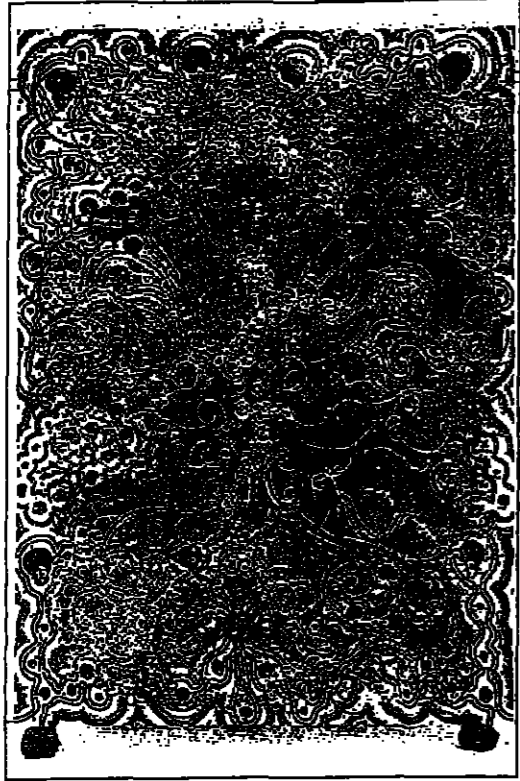
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Ofili's *Afrodizzia*, left, and Taylor-Wood's photographic interpretation of Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*, which has been condemned for replacing Christ with a topless woman. The artist's friends took the part of the disciples

Turner shortlist shows how modern art is dung

By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

AN ARTIST who applies elephant dung from London Zoo to his canvases and cut-outs from pornographic magazines was yesterday shortlisted for the Turner Prize.

Like the Turner Prize itself, which has caused offence with prize-winning works such as Damien Hirst's dead animals in formaldehyde, Chris Ofili is no stranger to controversy.

Nor is Sam Taylor-Wood, another of the four shortlisted artists: she has outraged religious groups by representing Christ as a topless woman in a photograph of her friends imitating Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*. The £20,000

prize, organised by the Tate Gallery, is awarded to a British artist under 50 for an outstanding exhibition in the past year. Also shortlisted from 500 entries were Tacita Dean, whose chalk on blackboard abstracts suggest stormy seascapes, and Cathy de Monchaux, whose use of metal intertwined with pink suede is said to be erotic.

Ofili and Taylor-Wood were featured in last summer's Sensation show at the Royal Academy of Arts and are collected by Charles Saatchi, the country's foremost supporter of contemporary art. The Tate hailed the final four as

exciting talents. But David Lee, Editor of *Art Review*, was disappointed with the choice. "It's just the usual predictable crew," he said. He dismissed Ofili's use of dung as a gimmick: "If he was just a painter, you wouldn't look twice."

Ofili, 29, who was born in Manchester to a Nigerian family, studied at the Chelsea School of Art and the Royal College of Art. He was inspired to use dung after a visit to Zimbabwe, and draws on a wide range of other cultural references, including 1970s comics, contemporary black music and African textiles.

One critic, reviewing his recent



Ofili and Taylor-Wood

show at Southampton City Art Gallery, said his work called *Afrodizia* embodied fantasy and fear: "The supposed superior potency of the black man is symbolised by a collection of out-

size phalluses outlined in black dots on a white ground. Or they seem to be dots. But when you look really closely, you see that each dot is actually a tiny head sporting huge Afro hair." Other works by Ofili include *Pimpin ain't Easy*, with magazine cuttings of women with their legs open.

Marina Warner, the author and critic who is one of the Turner judges, said that Ofili's material was "difficult", but applauded his daring: "He's interested in the sacred and profane." The artist himself said: "My project is not a PC project... It allows you to laugh about issues that are potentially serious."

Taylor-Wood, 31, a graduate of

Goldsmiths' College, southeast London, stages scenes to convey "various states of being" and has become known for provocative creations that use bolts, belts and fetishistic gear. The Tate hailed *Wrecked*, her interpretation of Leonardo's *Last Supper*, as enigmatic.

De Monchaux, 37, a graduate of Camberwell and Goldsmiths', uses folded and stuffed suede, wall-mounted on metal frames, to hint at parts of the body. The Tate said: "These objects speak unmistakably of sexuality in all its contrasting manifestations. They imply both softness and rigidity, gentleness and bondage."

Warner said of the work: "It's possibly dangerous and spiky and

even cruel or perverse. It's an exploration of desire and pleasure."

Dean, 32, who trained at Falmouth and the Slade, produces a wide range of work. Her blackboard paintings are seen as storyboards, combining images with the odd word or phrase implying a narrative. For *Disappearing at Sea*, she filmed the changing light inside a Berwickshire lighthouse in videos lasting four and 14 minutes.

The judges, who include Neil Tennant of the pop group Pet Shop Boys, will announce the winner on December 1. The four artists will feature in an exhibition at the Tate from October 28 to January 10. Last year, the exhibition attracted a record 85,000 visitors.

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Virgin rail lines top list of passenger complaints

By RICHARD DUCE

TWO rail lines operated by Richard Branson's Virgin Group top a league table of passenger complaints published yesterday. The 25 rail operators attracted almost a million complaints over the past year.

This equals 115 complaints for every 100,000 journeys made. But this first report from John Swift, QC, the Rail Regulator, adds that, as only 19 per cent of passengers say they would complain, "the real level of customer dissatisfaction with train operators' services may thus be much higher."

Virgin West Coast received almost seven times the average figure and Virgin Cross-Country about six times. Between them they accounted for almost 200,000 of the complaints to the 25 train companies in the 12 months ending March 1998 - 650,000 in writing and 310,000 by

telephone. Mr Swift said that the figures were not aimed at shaming companies. They were meant to show that some companies had better systems for dealing with complaints than others.

Virgin operates InterCity lines, where passengers are more likely to complain than regular commuters, to get compensation for late or cancelled trains. While the Virgin West Coast line received 796 complaints per 100,000 journeys and the Island Line only ten, the former carried more than 14 million passengers, compared to the Isle of Wight company, which recorded 703,000 journeys.

Mr Swift said that he expected complaints to rise as companies accepted that reacting to problems led to better services. It was hoped that eventually complaints would fall. The right to complain was not a "whingers' charter", he

said. "Passengers have a right to expect excellent service."

He recommended that train operators improve their methods of recording and answering complaints, especially those by telephone. They also needed to deal with complaints more quickly.

Sixty per cent of complaints were about the train services themselves, including lateness and cancellations. Other common irritations centred on fares, information and staff conduct.

Virgin said: "We believe that the use of the well-known Virgin brand has raised customer expectations and made people more likely to write, since they believe their comments will be acted upon. Despite all this, we are still receiving letters from fewer than 1 per cent of our customers."

Letters, page 25

Paula Yates tried to kill herself like Hutchence

By CLAUDIA JOSEPH

PAULA YATES was recovering in a private clinic yesterday after trying to commit suicide.

The television presenter, still grieving for Michael Hutchence, her lover who hanged himself in a hotel room in Sydney last November, tried to take her own life in the same way. Miss Yates, 38, was found barely conscious, hanging from a noose on her bedroom door on Tuesday morning by Belinda Brewin, a close friend.

She was later admitted to the Priory Clinic, in Roehampton, southwest London, where she was treated two months ago for a nervous breakdown. A day earlier, she had returned from Sri Lanka, where she had been filming for a BBC holiday programme. Yesterday Linda Plant, 54, her half-sister, said: "We are very worried and very distressed about her. She needs the best possible care and attention."

Miss Yates has been beset by troubles since divorcing Bob Geldof, 43, the former Boomtown Rats singer. They have been fighting for custody of their three daughters, Fifi Tribbelle, 15, Peaches, 9, and Pixie, 7, who are living with Geldof.

She is convinced that Hutchence, 37, the father of her daughter Heavenly Hiraani Tiger Lily, died as a result of an accident. She is also involved in a battle over the INXS singer's £14.4 million inheritance, with Patricia Glassop, his mother, and Tina, his step-sister.

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صكنا من الاصل

Rise in women drivers adds to congestion

Londoners find public transport costly and inconvenient, writes Nigel Hawkes

WOMEN drivers are largely responsible for the growth of traffic in London, a new study has shown. The inconvenience, cost and perceived lack of security of buses, the Tube and trains are mainly responsible for putting so many more women behind the wheel, London Research Centre, an organisation set up by the London boroughs, says. Between 1981 and 1991, the increase in the number of cars on London's roads was almost entirely down to women making more trips. Male driving has not increased, while female driving shows a 50 per cent increase. The growth in women drivers is matched by an increase in the number of accidents involving women, which has now overtaken that of men. Serious injuries to women involving one or more nights in hospital have increased by 173 per cent between 1981 and 1991. The report argues that the reasons chosen by women for driving are justified and powerful, and that the transport problems identified by women reflect the kind of trips they make — shopping, working and taking children to and from school. The car is particularly valued after dark, says the report, when security from verbal abuse or physical attack is added to its "door-to-door" convenience. Walking home from a bus stop or Tube stop is especially unpopular. The study is based on the London Area Transport Survey, a large study carried out in 1991. It includes interviews with women travellers and identifies six reasons why women prefer car travel. They are: convenience, security, cost, time, journey awkwardness, and feeling in control of personal space and journey. Improvements in public transport must address two issues if they are to wean women from their cars, the report says. "The first is the problem of insecure travel, particularly when walking or using public transport. The second is a new role for public transport staff, with greater emphasis on customer care, courtesy and respect." Traditional planning had inhibited a real understanding of people's travel choices. Aylene Friesner, deputy chief executive of the London Research Centre, said: "Public transport is currently not geared to meet women's travel needs, with the result they are opting to use the car, where they can afford to do so. I hope the forthcoming transport White Paper will take a positive approach to providing real alternatives to the car."



A strict eye was kept on hemlines in the Stewards' Enclosure

Earrings mark arrival of lady's day at Henley

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

A PAIR of "jazzy" earrings signalled the end of 159 years of male domination at the Henley Royal Regatta. The wearer, Di Ellis, is the first woman steward to be appointed for life. The only other women stewards have been three mayors, who automatically held the honour during their year in office in recognition of the fact that the first regatta in 1839 was introduced by the mayor. Mrs Ellis will wear the stewards' traditional navy blue blazer with a calf-length skirt instead of cream flannels. "The jazzy earrings will be my way of introducing a bit of femininity," she said. Mrs Ellis, chairman of the Amateur Rowing Association, joins 52 men on the self-selecting body of stewards. "I was stunned that they asked me, but very proud," she said. "The invitation was in recognition of the success of women's rowing at international level." She rowed for a club and stroked the Great Britain eight in the 1966 European championship. It is ladies' year at Henley, with the regatta organisers introducing a women's invitation eight. Four crews have been invited from Great Britain, Australia, Canada and the United States. Michael Sweeney, chairman of the regatta, said the success of women's rowing nationally and internationally should be



Di Ellis sporting her steward's badge

reflected in the programme at Henley. "The best rowers in the world, both men and women, should have the opportunity of racing at the best regatta in the world." Not all women were being welcomed yesterday, however. Within two hours of the gates opening, dozens had been turned away because their skirts revealed their knees. "Skirts or dresses have got to cover the knees, and we have seen a few this morning," Cieron Duggan, head of security at the Stewards' Enclosure, said. "Some were borderline, but we've also seen one or two belts. The first day is always the worst."

Several seasoned attenders, who had learnt to lower the length to get in and then hitch their skirts up once inside, were happily displaying the offending body parts. Robert Trehearne Jones, a regatta spokesman, said: "There are always problems with short skirts, in spite of the fact that members of the enclosure are reminded every year to make their guests familiar with the dress code regulations." A record number of crews performed to half-empty stands along the one-mile 550-yard course yesterday. This year's entry of 552 crews beat the total of 547 in 1996. There are 118 overseas crews from 19 countries. The unsettled weather considerably reduced the crowds. But the enclosure bars still expect to serve 30,000 pints of Pimm's, 50,000 pints of beer and 5,000 bottles of champagne during the five days. Not participating this year will be the oldest member of the Stewards' Enclosure, Ernest Huddy, 95, from Dorset, who rowed at Henley in 1924, will miss his first regatta for 52 years because of a hip replacement operation. Also absent is the rower Tony Crosbie, who pulled out of his race at the last minute when his wife unexpectedly went into labour. His place was taken by Damian Hammond, at 18st 8lb the heaviest rower on the day.

Regatta report, page 51

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Healthy response to food message

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

A TEAM of British psychologists claims to have come up with a sure-fire solution to a seemingly intractable problem faced by millions of distraught parents: how to persuade children to eat their greens. Researchers at the University of Wales have created a set of fictional live-action and cartoon characters capable of exerting enormous influence over two to seven-year-olds. More than 200 five to seven-year-olds were shown an action adventure video of a group of children, aged eight to ten and known as the Food Dudes, who asked the children to help them in their fight against General Junk and his evil junk food junta by eating fruit and vegetables to stay healthy and keep the life force strong. Younger children, aged two to four, were exposed to a different video in which two cartoon characters, Jarvis and Jess, were shown enjoying fruit and vegetables. In a paper to the British Psychological Society's annual health conference in Wales today, Michael Bowdery, a researcher on the project, said: "We realised that children respond well to the opinions of their peers, especially if the others are a bit older than themselves. They look up to them and treat them like heroes." The message was reinforced with a range of Food Dude prizes, including stickers, lunchboxes and baseball caps, which were awarded to children who consumed sufficient quantities of targeted foods. Mr Bowdery said the scheme, tested in schools, a day-nursery and in children's homes, had been highly successful in removing tension from family dinner times. Tests conducted in a class of 26 primary school children showed that fruit consumption more than doubled and vegetable consumption increased fourfold in just 12 days. Consumption levels remained just as high after six months.

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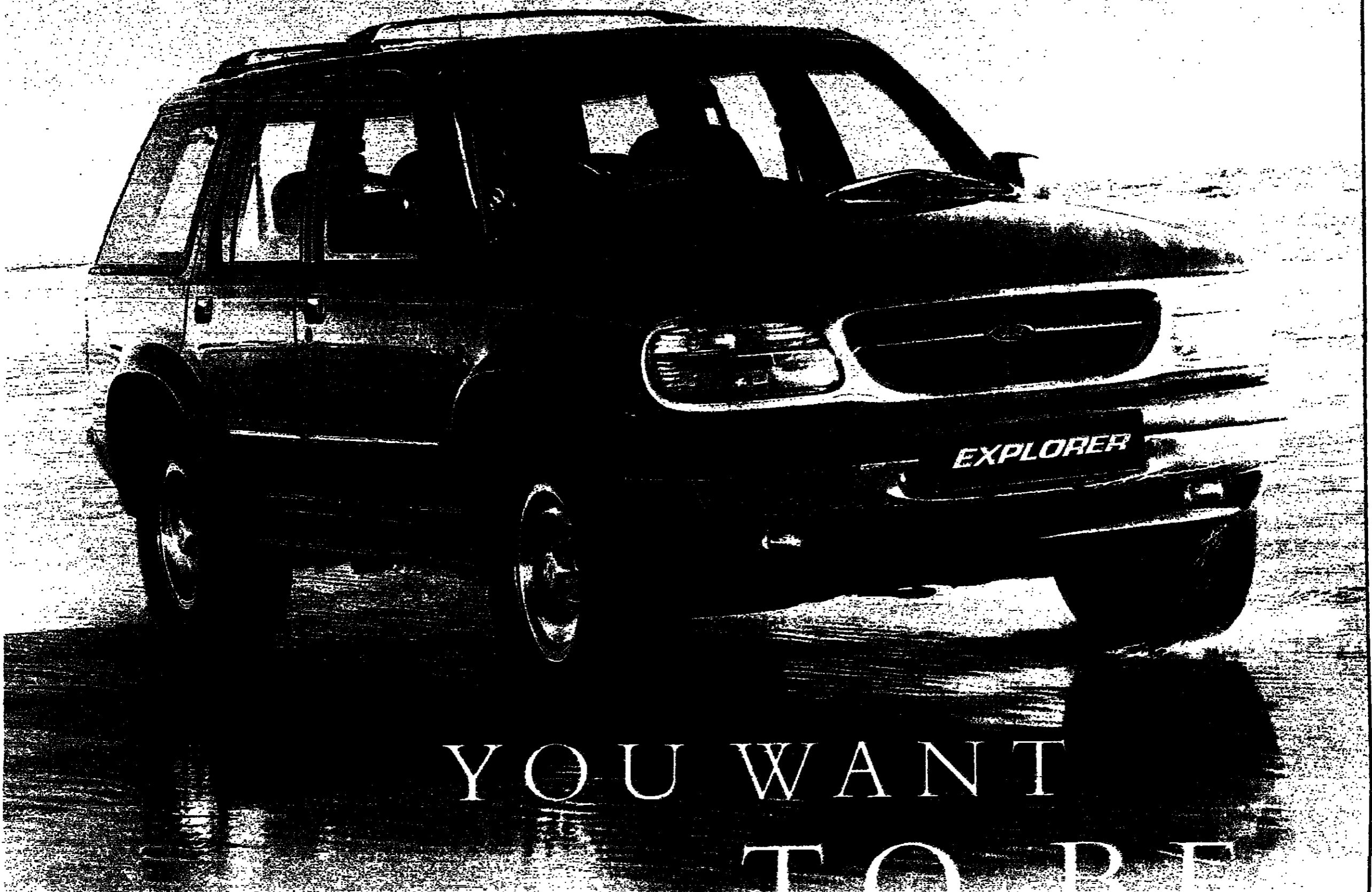
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Hanley: MEP hope

Hanley is ready for comeback

SIR JEREMY HANLEY, the amiable if gaffe-prone former Tory party chairman, is preparing for a political comeback as a Euro-MP (James Landale writes). Sir Jeremy, who lost his Richmond and Barnes seat last year, has emerged as a front-runner among potential Tory candidates for the new London Euro-region. He will be among 25 people interviewed by senior Tories this weekend. Their shortlist of 15 will then be ranked in order of preference by a mass meeting on July 11. Under the new system of proportional representation for next year's elections to the European Parliament, each party will put forward an ordered list of candidates in each of eleven regions. Sir Jeremy has a good chance of securing one of the top slots in London, where the Tories are expected to win three seats.

Blair and Brown tackle problem of rift rumours

A RUSH of speculation suggesting tensions between Tony Blair and Gordon Brown prompted a strong denial of trouble yesterday from Downing Street. The Prime Minister's press spokesman, who usually stays clear of such matters, went out of his way to quash the idea that the most important partnership in politics was under strain. There was no rift. "There is only a problem if there is a problem. There is not a problem," he said. People trying to suggest there were difficulties "underestimate what they have been through together in modernising the Labour Party, running the election campaign, winning the election, and getting through the first full year of government". Mr Blair and Mr Brown worked more closely together than any Chancellor and Prime Minister in recent history. The reality of that was more important than newspaper articles suggesting otherwise, he said. Mr Blair's spokesman is probably justified in his main assertion. No one has been able to produce any evidence of any falling out between Mr Blair and Mr Brown at a personal level. Their early morning daily meeting — on their own without officials present — is the most important in government. Any

The Cabinet's main partners

know they cannot afford to drift apart, writes Philip Webster

differences they have over policies tend to get ironed out there away from the gaze of colleagues in committee or full Cabinet. Their friendship may not be quite what it was before the leadership election of 1994 but it remains strong. They know better than anyone that they must not drift apart. But Mr Blair and Mr Brown are aware that there is a problem, and at one of their regular private meetings yesterday they discussed it. The difficulty is that the feeling of mistrust that has grown up over several years between the Blair and Brown camps has worsened considerably in recent weeks. A senior Labour politician said privately yesterday that "the camp followers are running out of control". He may not be far from the truth. With the long-awaited Cab-

net reshuffle only weeks away the Brownites and Blairites in government and those waiting on the back benches for promotion have been manoeuvring for position. Some have been briefing against each other with abandon in recent days, resulting in a series of damaging headlines on feature articles, including "The clouds are gathering over Gordon Brown" in the *London Evening Standard* on Tuesday. Some in No 10, who resent what they see as Mr Brown's overbearing tendencies, are not slow to say unkind things about him. And even though relations between Mr Brown and Peter Mandelson, the Minister without Portfolio, are better than they were, the deep suspicions between their aides and supporters remain. This week Mr Brown has felt the injured party. He is known to be upset and worried about the latest spate of stories. They dominated his chat with Mr Blair yesterday. But at other times this year Mr Blair has been irritated and his close circle outraged, notably after the publication of Paul Routledge's biography of Mr Brown, which suggested that he harboured grudges over the 1994 election to succeed John Smith as party leader. The comprehensive spend-



ing review has involved painful behind-the-scenes confrontations between the Treasury and the spending ministers. Mr Brown upset his long-time ally Margaret Beckett and his friends in the unions over his tough line on the minimum wage. He is apparently furious at suggestions from the Blairites that he is cosying up to the

unions to prepare for the day when he again has a tilt at the leadership. A close friend said: "If he was trying to please them he has gone a strange way about it." Yesterday a source close to Mr Blair said that he would be horrified if he knew that people who called themselves his allies were briefing against Mr Brown. "If they are doing

it, they are not doing it with his authority." Mr Brown and Mr Blair are believed to have concluded yesterday that they will have to live with the rumours. "They both know that there are people out there who will try to make things awkward between them," a source said. "They know that they will have to rise above it."

Speaker puts new MP in her place

By Polly Newton

FOURTEEN months after being elected, a Labour MP proved yesterday that she is still a new girl with her debut at Prime Minister's Questions. Jane Griffiths (Reading East) asked: "Does the Prime Minister recall that the Tories campaigned in support of poverty pay by fighting to try to stop the Government's Minimum Wage Bill. Do you hope as I do that the Tories will — for once — stick to their principles and at the next election we will campaign about having brought in the minimum wage and..." With a cry of "order!", the Speaker intervened. "I must remind you... that the Prime Minister is responsible for his own Government's policies and not for the activities of the Opposition. When urged to rephrase the question, Miss Griffiths froze. The Speaker shouted: "Miss Griffiths! It is your first question at Prime Minister's Question Time. Could you rephrase it in some way." After faltering again, and being prompted by colleagues, she finally got it: "Would you agree with me — share with me — in confirming that our policy is to support the poorest workers in this country?" "Well done," Miss Boothroyd beamed. It was no masterpiece but it had the desired effect and Miss Griffiths finally got an answer. It may be a while before she tries again.

Poll gloom is no cause for Labour concern

GORDON BROWN will not be too alarmed at the sharp drop in economic optimism revealed by the latest MORI poll in *The Times* today. It was bound to happen some time. The strong economic expansion could not continue for ever. Indeed, it has been the policy of both the Treasury and the Bank of England since last summer to slow the rate of growth in order to prevent an acceleration in inflation. The problem has been judging when, and how much, to apply the brakes — as has been reflected in the seesaw debates of the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee this year.

But the balance has now clearly shifted. Surveys of business opinion and order books, especially of exports, have all turned distinctly more pessimistic in the past few weeks. That change in mood has now clearly worked through to affect public attitudes. This probably reflects a combination of the latest round of mortgage rate increases, the latest announcements about redundancies and the recent flurry of media stories about the Asian economic crisis and the increased dangers of a recession in Britain.

Not only is the latest decline in the MORI economic optimism index very sharp for a single month — only exceeded twice in the past six years — but it also takes the index to the lowest level for three years. The surprising feature is not the size of the drop — such adjustments are often sharp — but the time it has taken to come. This has been matched by a small increase in dissatisfaction with the Government, though its overall rating is still healthily positive, compared with the sizeable negative ratings which the Major Government suffered throughout its life.

The key question is when this will start to affect voting intentions. At present, Tony Blair's personal ratings are slipping a little, but only from their recent stratospheric levels. The ratings of the main parties remain virtually static as they have been since late last autumn. Labour is in the 52 to 56 per cent range, and the Tories are stuck in the 26 to 28 per cent level.

There is no evidence that voters are yet willing to reassess their verdicts of May last year. The Government is being given a chance to prove itself — and the benefit of the doubt for any slip-ups and rows. Meanwhile, the Tories suffer all the frustrations of opposition, being ignored

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

and unable to make an impact on public opinion. Some spokesmen have become even more shrill and strident. It is always a tell-tell sign of such frustration and political immaturity when spokesmen start calling for the resignation of ministers, as Peter Ainsworth absurdly demanded of Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, on Monday. Mr Ainsworth is going to have to learn to be patient. The Tories' time will come, but not yet.

The main challenge to the Government is to keep calm, and united, in face of the economic slowdown and probable rise in unemployment. Mr Brown and Mr Blair are far more worried at

present by the recurrent batch of stories about rifts in Downing Street. They are determined to squash them. Their relationship remains good — with differences of policy more of nuance and timing than substance. It is absurd to view Mr Brown as more pro-European than a sceptic Mr Blair. That is an invention of the sceptics to divide the two. Working links between 10 Downing Street and the Treasury are also better than before Christmas. The trouble is the mutual backbiting among their circle of advisers. That is a real danger to the Government — and one which becomes serious if the economic news deteriorates further, the Labour poll lead falls and the party starts losing elections and by-elections.

PETER RIDDELL

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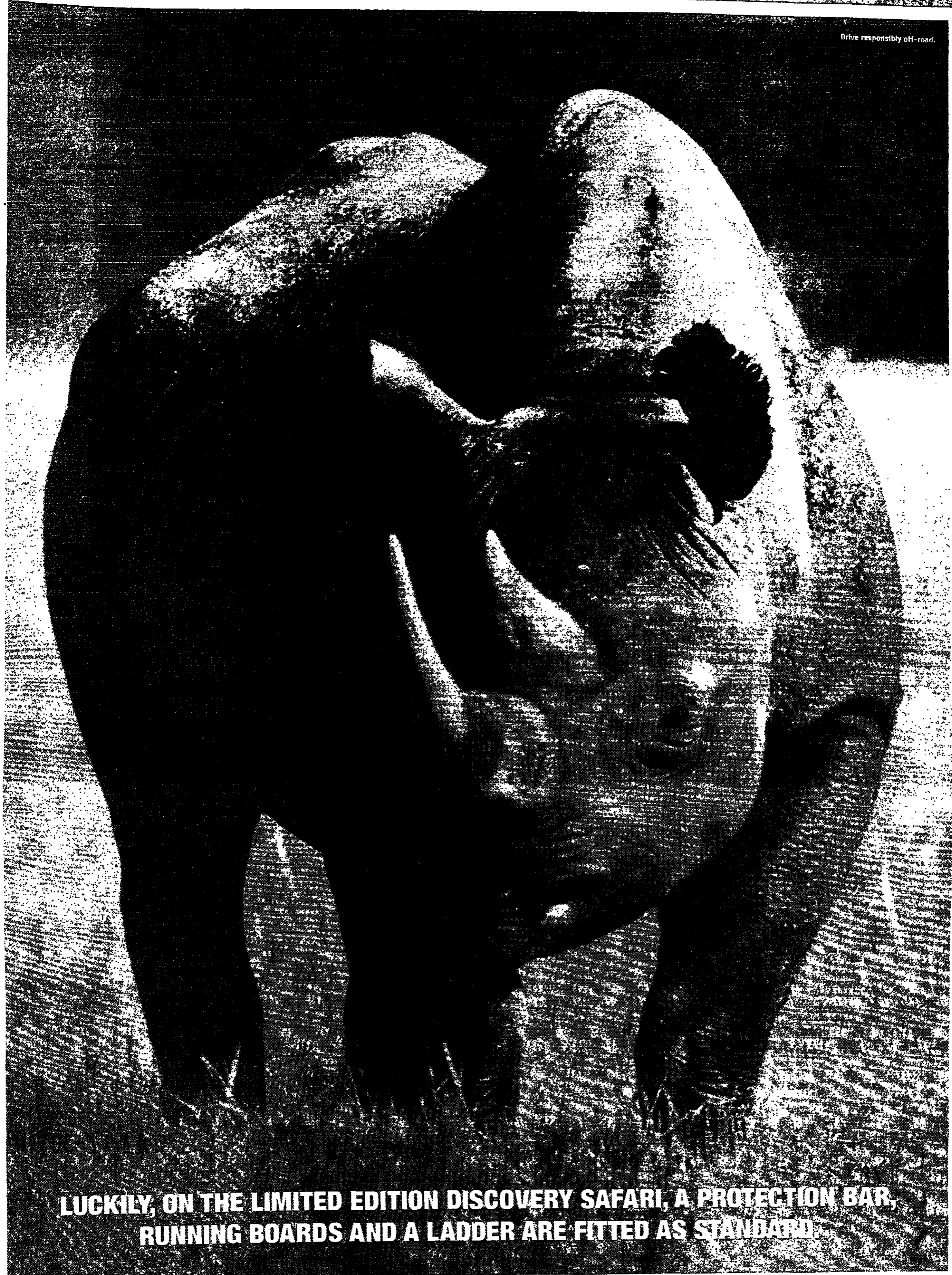
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Evidence in Lawrence case was 'hopeless'

Lawyer defends Crown decision to halt prosecution, reports Lin Jenkins

THE Crown Prosecution Service lawyer who discontinued the prosecution in the Stephen Lawrence murder case said yesterday that he took the decision with his mind and not his heart.

Howard Youngerwood, a London Crown branch prosecutor, told the Lawrence inquiry that he took the decision with his mind and not his heart. He said that the evidence gathered in July 1993 — three months after the killing — because of the lack of evidence. Mr Youngerwood said he had been led to believe initially that the police had gathered little evidence, although there was the possibility of a successful prosecution against several suspects.

But he described his disappointment when he read the file on the case. "The evidence was, in my view, even worse than I had been led to believe." Mr Youngerwood insisted that identification evidence given by the victim's friend, Duwayne Brooks, the key witness to the stabbing by a group of white youths, was not good enough to secure a conviction against the two men he picked out. Neil Accourt and Luke Knight.

He clashed with Michael Mansfield, QC, for the Lawrence family, who accused him of taking the "role of a judge". Mr Mansfield also

suggested that Mr Youngerwood should have asked for an adjournment in the court proceedings while police attempted to gather more evidence, rather than stopping the prosecution.

But Mr Youngerwood insisted: "However much I was filled with revulsion about this crime and the view, which I think everyone has taken, of the suspects, as lawyers we could not allow suspects to remain in custody when really there was no basis of evidence as of July 1993 and just the possibility of forensic evidence emerging two months later."

Mr Youngerwood added that the evidence presented by the police was "hopeless". Mr Brooks had said neither of the men he picked out was the "stabber", who was the only

person he had described after being "transfixed" by him.

Mr Youngerwood added: "I could not be ruled by my heart over my head. It was a difficult human decision to make because of my feelings and emotions about racism. The position might have been different if Duwayne Brooks had identified the stabber."

When he heard that the family planned a private prosecution, he said he was so desperate that he collapsed in the street. He offered their solicitor, Imran Khan, all the papers so he could see for himself that there was no evidence.

He said he knew that, if the prosecution failed, the youths would never be tried again. Under British law, a person cannot be tried twice for the same crime. The private prosecution was thrown out at the Old Bailey in 1996. "Unless the family had evidence the police and CPS did not have, the prosecution was bound to fail," Mr Youngerwood said.

"I was very worried. I feared what would happen and that we would never get justice. The consistent publicity on behalf of the family said that they had sufficient evidence to prosecute. If that is so, Mr Khan has a few questions to answer."

Five men — the two originally charged, together with Jamie Accourt, David Norris and Gary Dobson — were charged in the private prosecution. The case against Neil Accourt, Mr Dobson and Mr Knight was dismissed when the judge said that the identification evidence of Mr Brooks was unsafe.

Neville and Doreen Lawrence said in a statement after yesterday's session ended: "Like the police, the CPS appear to be blaming everyone else, rather than themselves, for the failure to convict the five suspects."

"The fact that three of the suspects stood trial at all is a testament to the action taken by us. We still believe that, if the matter had been left to the jury, the suspects would now be behind bars."

STRAW RENEWS FARRAKHAN BAN

Jack Straw is to maintain the ban on Louis Farrakhan, the leader of the Nation of Islam, from entering the United Kingdom, the Home Office said last night. The Home Secretary made his decision after reviewing the exclusion order and the disruption of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry. To ensure that the decision cannot be ruled unfair by the courts, Mr Farrakhan will be given another opportunity to ask Mr Straw to lift the ban. Douglas Hurd, then Home Secretary, imposed it 12 years ago because of Mr Farrakhan's verbal attacks on white people, Jews and homosexuals. The Nation of Islam made no comment last night on Mr Straw's decision.



A nurse's uniform for the future, centre, created by London fashion and design students, contrasts with styles from the birth of the NHS in 1948, left, and today

Hospitals will have to 'earn' extra cash

By Jill Sherman

TONY BLAIR will call today for the modernisation of the NHS as he pledges "substantially" more money for health in the next three years. He will indicate changes to raise standards in hospitals as Labour has tried to do in schools.

Mr Blair will not put a figure on proposed increases in NHS spending, which is being decided as part of the spending review, but Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, is said to be seeking an extra £10 billion over three years.

Mr Blair will make clear that any new money will have to be tied to modernisation projects in "a crusade for excellence". These will include proposals announced by Mr Dobson yesterday to set performance targets, better monitoring of the service and a new health supreme with powers to send in teams to take over management of hospitals.

Mr Dobson said he would end the lottery under which life-saving treatments freely prescribed in one health authority were not available in others. He also intended to introduce a statutory obligation on NHS trusts to meet quality standards, not just financial targets.

Mr Dobson gave details of a National Institute for Clinical Excellence, which would provide guidance on new technologies and drugs.

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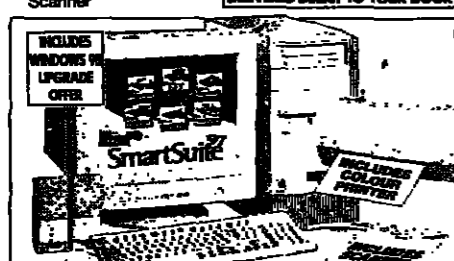


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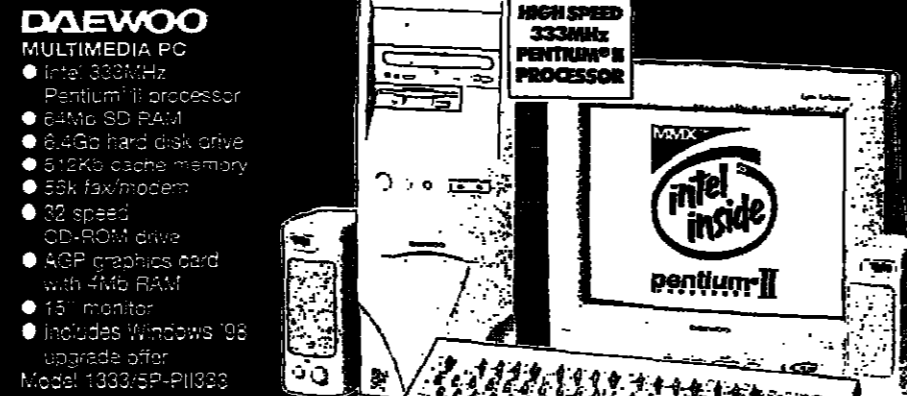
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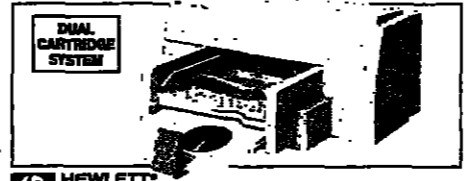
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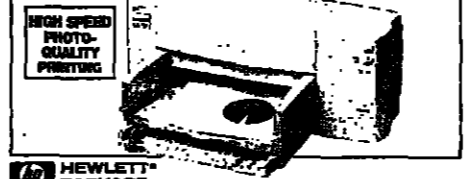
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Work plan 'will reward truants'

By Victoria Fletcher

PLANS for disaffected pupils to be allowed to drop two school subjects in favour of work experience were a truants' charter, a head teachers' leader said yesterday.

Nearly 1,000 under-achieving 14-year-olds, many of whom have a history of truancy, will take part in 21 pilot projects to win back their interest in learning by spending up to a day a week in college or work-based training, ministers said yesterday.

John Sutton, general secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, said: "For them it will be a truants' charter. Others who do attend school regularly will ask why truants should be rewarded in this way for their failure. And how will the Government respond when these youngsters decide not to turn up at their college lectures or their work placements?"

A senior government source said this was "utter rubbish". He added: "The aim is to ensure that young people who

are potential truants stay in education, and have the opportunity to realise that there is some point to it — that without qualifications they will not get a decent job."

"It's a way of ensuring that they are attending school or college and learning, rather than hanging around on street corners." Launching the trial projects, David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, said: "Too many youngsters leave without a single qualification. For these teenagers we need to offer something more than the National Curriculum."

"In the past, these youngsters could have learnt a trade and seen the direct link between training and work. We need to rebuild those links."

One teaching union endorsed the scheme. Nigel de Gruchy, of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, said it was "a serious attempt to make education more relevant to disaffected pupils".

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River jump fan died in leap from car park

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A MAN who jumped off river bridges for a hobby was killed when he leapt from the top of a multistorey car park into three feet of water.

Mark Humphrey had "a passion" for his pastime, friends told an inquest yesterday. He had dived from every bridge in the centre of Norwich over the River Wensum, sometimes in front of crowds. PC Paul Ray said he saw Mr Humphrey, 34, pacing "nonchalantly" along the top ledge of the car park 70ft above the river on April 24. "He appeared calm and focused" on what he was doing. He took two full steps backwards, ran forwards and jumped.

Before he jumped he shouted to the officers asking how deep the water was, the inquest heard. "He opened up his arms and legs as if to make a star shape out of his body. He hit the river in a flat position," added PC Ray. Mr Humphrey, a sheet metal worker, from Norwich, died from drowning or cardiac arrest. The coroner recorded a verdict of accidental death.

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES

A MAN left a young mother permanently disabled when he stabbed her in the head while she was Christmas shopping.

Joanne Davies, a 20-year-old hairdresser, was in a coma for two days after being attacked while out with her boyfriend and five-month-old baby on Christmas Eve last year. As a result of her injuries she missed her son's first Christmas and has not been able to cuddle him properly.

After Shane Doyle was sentenced to 6½ years in jail, Alan Davies, Joanne's father, said he was "bitterly disappointed" that he had got off so lightly. Swansea Crown Court was told that Doyle, a 25-year-old builder with a string of convictions for violence, theft and motoring offences, stabbed Miss Davies after an altercation in a supermarket car park.

He had shouted "Imbecile" at her boyfriend, Mark Duignan, after complaining that they had parked too close to the car in which he was a

Jail for car passenger who stabbed woman in head



Mark Duignan and Joanne Davies, who was attacked by Shane Doyle, right

passenger. A few minutes later he had attacked them at a roundabout in the main square in Pembroke.

Huw Rees, for the prosecution, told the court that Doyle "jumped out and forced Mr Duignan to pull up by walking in front of his car". He had screamed abuse at them and Miss Davies had got out of the car in panic. Doyle had approached her and she had struck out because she feared she was going to be attacked.

Mr Rees said Miss Davies did not see the 7in knife Doyle was holding. "The blow did not make contact with Doyle, but he struck at her head. Joanne felt a severe pain and blinding headache. Blood poured out of the wound and she was knocked backwards."

Miss Davies had been admitted to the intensive care unit at Morriston Hospital in Swansea, where a scan had revealed a large blood clot in her brain. For several weeks

she had been paralysed down her left side and still had a weakness in her arm and leg.

Mr Rees said: "She is missing her normal mother's contact with her baby because she is unable to hold or cuddle him. It is feared this could be permanent damage and there is also a risk of epilepsy. She is still undergoing regular physiotherapy."

Doyle, of Pembroke, admitted wounding with intent and attempting to pervert the

course of justice. Simon Evans, the driver of the car in which he was a passenger, told police that Doyle, who always carried a knife, had tried to persuade him to say that he was not in the car.

Interviewed by police, Doyle, who had been drinking, admitted carrying the knife but said Miss Davies must have fallen on it.

Mr Justice Keene said: "It is clear you became enraged over a minor incident and, as a result, you forced the car to stop. It was an attack with a knife on an unarmed woman, which was a form of road rage. She could well have died and may well suffer a permanent disability."

Doyle, originally from Manchester, was also in breach of an 18-month suspended sentence for theft and assault on a policeman.

After the case, Mr Davies said: "Considering the severity of the incident and the trauma of last Christmas, he has got off exceptionally lightly. With his list of convictions he should have been jailed for a minimum of ten years."

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Lonely hearts rapist faces a life sentence

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A DOUBLE rapist whose violent mood swings were likened to Jekyll and Hyde was warned yesterday that he faces a life sentence after being convicted of attacking two women, one of whom he met through an advertisement in a lonely hearts column.

George Hayes, 25, was violent, sexually deviant, manipulative and a highly plausible liar. "He is a very dangerous man and poses a substantial risk, in particular to women," Judge Graham Boal said at the Old Bailey.

He remanded Hayes for medical and psychiatric reports before sentence on September 4. The judge said Hayes had "not only raped two young women over a period of hours, while imprisoning them - but subjected them to extreme and unpredictable violence".

Judge Boal said that, if the jury accepted the women's evidence, "as they clearly did, then this man must have exhibited the symptoms attributed to Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde".

His first victim was a trainee solicitor, whom he met through a lonely hearts column. Three months later - on

bailed accused of her rape - Hayes raped a student after offering to help her find accommodation, Andrew Campbell, for the prosecution, had told the court.

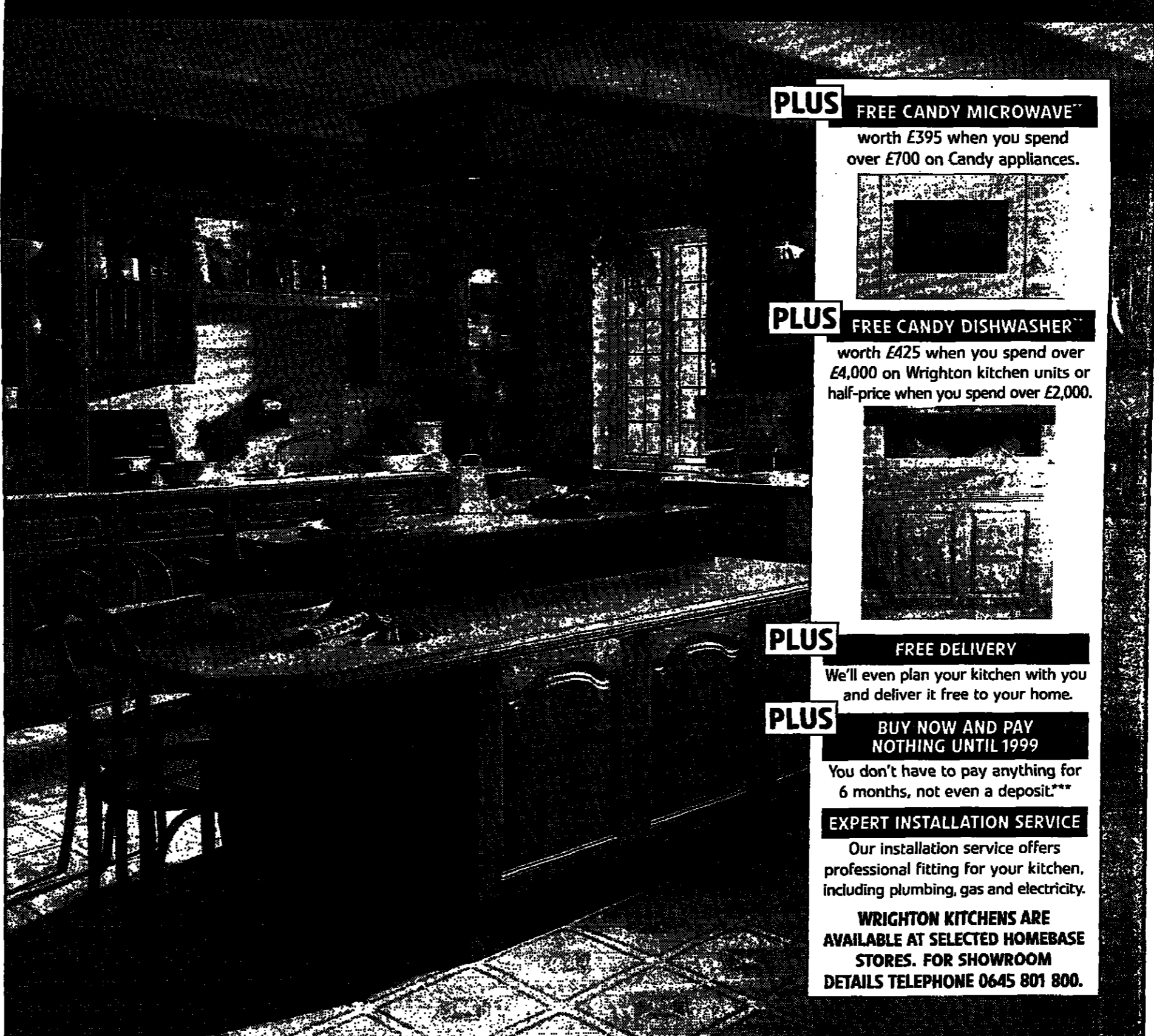
Hayes, from Stoke Newington, North London, had denied falsely imprisoning and raping both women last year.

His advertisement in the Soul Mates section of The Guardian was seen by the trainee solicitor, in her 20s. After a series of conversations, they met. On their next meeting they had sex with her consent. When she then said that she wanted to sleep, Hayes punched a wall mirror before he bit, slapped and repeatedly raped the woman.

He was still on bail last September when he met a foreign student trying to find a room. He advised the 21-year-old to go to a local hotel. Inside her room, he grabbed her by the throat, threw her against the wall, then raped her.

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust said: "People should be extremely careful about meeting people through lonely hearts ads. They should be wary of giving out personal details and be careful to always meet in a public place."

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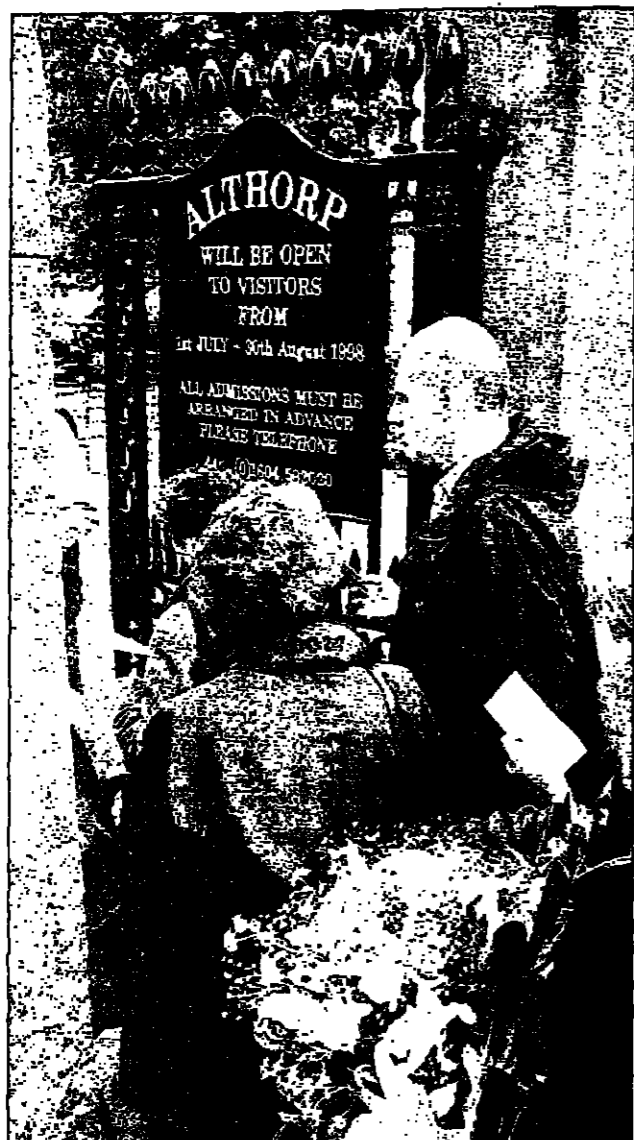
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Pilgrims find peace at shrine to Diana

PHOTOGRAPHS: MAX NASH AND JOHN GILES/PA



The gates of Earl Spencer's family home opened on what would have been the Princess's 37th birthday to admit 2,400 people yesterday. Many of the first arrivals headed first for the lakeside shrine facing her island grave

THE faithful had their first opportunity yesterday to worship at the temple of Diana. Unanimously, they pronounced it tasteful, restrained and moving, a place of unhappy memories but also of peace.

These were the dedicated, who had waited for hours on jammed telephone lines when tickets to see Earl Spencer's memorial to his sister, Diana, Princess of Wales, first went on sale. Yesterday, on what would have been her 37th birthday, they were up before dawn in Plymouth and Norfolk, Gloucestershire and Wigan, for the pilgrimage to Althorp and the first public viewing of the Princess's grave and the new museum of her brief, sparkling life.

Twelve hundred were admitted in the morning at up to £9.50 a head and another £3 for the catalogue, and a similar number in the afternoon. The earl was on hand to greet them and to share memories as, high above their heads, the Spencer family flag hung limply at half-mast on the

Althorp roof. "I had to be here on this day," Lord Spencer said. "I am deeply touched by the messages of support from all these people here."

Many of the early arrivals made straight for a view of the island grave, saving the tour of house and museum for later. They laid their flowers at the lakeside shrine, a wooden Doric temple that has been at Althorp since the 18th century, and which has now been embellished with marble plaques bearing quotations from the Princess and her brother and a marble silhouette of her.

The pile of flowers with their handwritten messages grew throughout the day, but it was tiny compared with the mountains that piled before Kensington Palace last September. The numbers admitted to Althorp since the 18th century, and which has now been embellished with marble plaques bearing quotations from the Princess and her brother and a marble silhouette of her. The pile of flowers with their handwritten messages grew throughout the day, but it was tiny compared with the mountains that piled before Kensington Palace last September. The numbers admitted to Althorp since the 18th century, and which has now been embellished with marble plaques bearing quotations from the Princess and her brother and a marble silhouette of her.

oak benches surrounding the oval lake, nursing their flasks of tea and gazing at the tree-covered island where the grave is hidden by greenery but where a stone urn with a carved representation of an eternal flame sprouts beneath an ancient oak. Around the lake are oak benches surrounding the oval lake, nursing their flasks of tea and gazing at the tree-covered island where the grave is hidden by greenery but where a stone urn with a carved representation of an eternal flame sprouts beneath an ancient oak. Around the lake are

orders to deal firmly but calmly with anyone attempting to enter the deep water and its thick underlying mud. The peace was broken by television helicopters and the nearby rattle of a mainline railway beyond the encircling woods.

But for yesterday's pilgrims the atmosphere was calm and devotional, and the word tasteful was on everyone's lips. Even the souvenirs in the gift shop are strictly of Althorp, with no image of the

Princess on any of them. Caroline Auster and her daughter, Mariette, from Braintree, Essex, laid a posy of pink silk roses at the shrine. "Lord Spencer has done Diana proud: this is a really, really nice place. I wanted so much to come today, because it is my birthday

realised how much she meant to us. I had to bring the children here; Diana is on television so much, they still can't believe she's dead."

Lord Spencer has spent £3 million creating the memorial, most of it on converting Althorp's stable block into a dark, restrained museum of her life, its rooms heavy with taped background music. Glass cases contain memorabilia of her childhood, including her school dictionary, her collection of china animals and a school report

from the age of 12, which sums her up: "Diana has been outstandingly helpful this term. She has proved herself efficient and a good organiser. If only she would put the same enthusiasm into her work, she could move mountains."

In another case is a Christmas card from 1980, bearing one of the sender's own watercolours and the handwritten inscription: "Much love from your tap-dancing partner - Charles." Yesterday the Prince of Wales toured a housing project in Charing Cross Road, London. Prince William was said to be at home after finishing his examinations at Eton and Prince Harry was at Ludgrove School. St James's Palace declined to say whether the Prince and his sons would visit the museum.

The longest queues at Althorp were for that part of the exhibition devoted to the Princess's clothes. Her wedding dress is displayed with the Spencer tiara, and another room contains 28 of her outfits, from evening dresses to the Ralph Lauren casuals she wore to inspect landmines of Angola.

"I was so moved when I saw the black dress she wore to the Tate Gallery on her 36th birthday - it

turned out to be her last public engagement," Carolyn Bramble-Chapman, from Norfolk, said. The room is dominated by one of several video screens throughout the museum, this one showing the Princess with her sons at Thorpe Park enjoying a rollercoaster ride, and ending with her laughing at the thrill of it. "That's the best bit of all, because that's how we remember her," Mrs Bramble-Chapman said.

The display ends with some 200 of the 9,300 books of condolences from around the world that were sent to Kensington Palace, along with 525,000 letters and messages. But the atmosphere among yesterday's visitors as they finished their tour and made for the 70p doughnuts and 90p coffee in the cafe was far from funereal. Like people recalling the death of Kennedy, the sisterhood of Diana sipped their coffee in the warm morning air and exchanged reminiscences of exactly how they first heard the news that so deeply affected them.

Alan Hamilton joins the first visitors taking flowers and memories to Althorp museum

‘I had to bring the children here; Diana is on television so much, they still can't believe she's dead’

Oil drum hurled into protester's home

By PAUL WILKINSON

A DRUM of diesel oil has been flung through the cottage window of a partly blind bachelor who won a court victory stopping a parish council from uprooting a 200-year-old hedge.

Under cover of darkness, the five-gallon plastic drum was hurled through the sitting-room window of Colin Seymour's home at Flamborough, East Yorkshire. The drum had been weighted with a chain and pierced in several places to allow the thick fuel to spray out over the room.

Humbly Grove Police are investigating a possible link between the attack and Mr Seymour's battle with Flamborough Parish Council over its plans to grub out the hedge to make way for a bowling green. Many villagers were unhappy with the decision, even though the green has since been laid elsewhere.

Mr Seymour, 64, a former teacher who has won more

than 80 court actions to defend the environment against developers and industrialists, said: "I had a feeling something like this might happen one day."

"I was away from home that night, together with my dog, Fred. Had we been at home, Fred would have been sleeping beneath that very window and would have been doused in diesel and flying glass. This could easily have resulted in loss of life."

He estimates the cost of repairs and replacing ruined carpets, furniture and decorations to be at least £2,000. Emergency services had to be called to clear diesel spill on the road outside.

In January last year Judge Thomas Cracknell ruled at Hull County Court that the hedge was protected by the 1765 Enclosure Act and that the parish had a duty to maintain it for ever. The council faces a bill for court



Colin Seymour and the broken window yesterday

costs estimated at £15,000, awarded after Mr Seymour and supporters from Yorkshire Wildlife Trust returned in April to complain about a breach of the ruling.

A parish council contractor instructed to clear rubbish from the hedge instead dug

out one side, exposing roots, and made a 12ft gap. The council agreed to sign an undertaking not to cause further damage and to ensure that the hedge was maintained. Judge Cracknell described Flamborough's handling of the case as ill-judged

and said they had acted in a "desultory and unhelpful way" in setting up its maintenance agreement.

The judgment in January 1997 was hailed as a decision that would protect up to 40,000 miles of hedgerow all over England. Judge Cracknell conceded: "He might be a hero to some, but to others he is the villain of the piece and a thorough nuisance."

Mr Seymour, who is also partially deaf and lives on invalidity benefit, said yesterday that "mindless violence" would not deter him from continuing his campaigns. He appealed for anyone who saw the incident or had information to contact the police. He said: "There must have been more than one person and they must have had a vehicle."

Robert Forrester, chief executive of the wildlife trust, said: "If some people think they can prevent environmentalists from upholding the law by bully-boy tactics and intimidation, they are badly mistaken."

Artist gives rare baby birds a ring

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

THREE fledgling ospreys, some of Britain's rarest birds, were briefly removed from their nest at the top of a 60ft Scots pine yesterday so they could be measured and ringed.

Keith Brookie, a wildlife artist, used a three-stage ladder to climb the tree at the Scottish Wildlife Trust's Loch of Lowes Nature Reserve near Dunkeld, Tayside, and clamber into the nest, which is about 6ft in diameter. Each bird was placed in an individual cloth bag and then lowered on a rope to the ground, where the ringing was carried out.

Alan Barclay, the full-time ranger at the reserve, said: "These young ospreys are about five weeks old now. They are very well grown and look to be in excellent condition."

Councils 'forced into land deals'

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

LOCAL authorities are being forced to earmark land for new housing, much of it on greenfield sites, decades before it is needed, a pressure group claims today.

A report by the Council for the Protection of Rural England says that the Government is locking county councils into inflexible long-term building programmes based on inflated forecasts of housing requirements.

This "predict and provide" approach has led to large areas of countryside being allocated unnecessarily for development while towns and cities are allowed to decay, it says.

Tony Burton, the council's assistant director for policy, said: "Our report highlights the serious flaws in the planning system and the bureaucratic inertia preventing

change and new thinking which can only be overcome by root and branch reform."

The report claims that 800,000 of the 900,000 new homes planned in southeast England between 1991 and 2016 have either been built already or have had sites chosen for them less than a third of the way through the 25-year planning period.

"With so much land in the pipeline, developers have no incentive to use brownfield [urban] sites and local authorities find it difficult to control either the rate or location of new building," it says.

Refurbishment and better use of the existing housing stock could meet much of the demand for new homes, it suggests. It estimates that there are twice as many empty houses in England as there are houses in Birmingham.

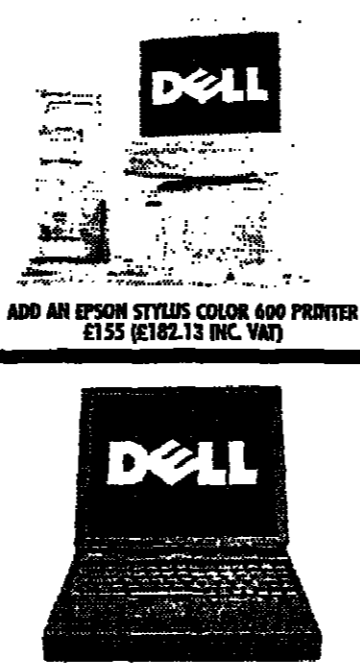
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Austria seeks to slow down EU expansion

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN VIENNA

AUSTRIA replaced Britain yesterday in the chair of the European Union and made clear that it would use the presidency to fight for harmonising taxes and to slow the opening of the EU frontiers to the former Communist states on its doorstep.

Viktor Klima, the Social Democratic Chancellor, shares Tony Blair's emphasis on advancing the EU's employment schemes, but the other priorities for his six months at the EU helm are far removed from those of the British Government.

History and geography explain much of this presidential lurch. The priorities of a big, free-trading Atlantic island have given way to those of a small and prosperous frontier country that is worried about being trampled in a westward rush by poor neighbours. For different reasons, both have quite Eurosceptic politics.

Although Herr Klima played down expectations, a sense of Austria's imperial grandeur pervaded the launch of its first presidency since it joined the EU in 1995. The Chancellor and his ministers sketched their ambitions in the white-and-gold chamber where Metternich chaired the Congress of Vienna that recast the map of Europe in 1815. The ceiling holes built for the spies of the Imperial Chancellor are

still "in working order. The deadlines for the big reforms on EU spending will not come until the German presidency next spring, but Austria is determined to make its mark while also convincing its own heavily Eurosceptic population of EU benefits.

The governing coalition of Socialists and Conservatives is eager to stop "unfair" tax competition once the single currency is launched on January 1, with Austria as one of its members.

"There is no question that the euro will create pressure for better co-ordination of economic and fiscal policy," Herr Klima said. It was "essential to stop the spiral of competition to a zero level of taxation". Austria is promoting a scheme, launched by the Commission and backed by France and others but opposed by Britain, to levy a minimum rate of 20 per cent on the income of savings and investments held outside the country of residence. Senior EU officials are to meet in Vienna this month to develop the plan. With some of the highest tax levels in the EU and still burdened by bureaucracy, Austria also wants "minimum" taxes on

corporate profits, an area in which the EU agreed on a code of conduct last year. While much of the EU supports moves to set minimum levels for taxes, with the exception of personal income tax, the approach is resisted by Britain, Germany and others. Any change in EU taxation policy requires unanimous backing of the 15 states.

Austria is also keen to see an EU-wide tax on carbon pollution, a scheme that does not find wide favour in Europe. Vienna also aims to convince the EU of the need to avoid any rapid opening of the Eastern borders when the former Communist states win membership some time in the next five years or so.

Vienna's presidential priorities are far removed from those of Britain

Herr Klima and his team insist that expanding the Union is a vital project with great long-term benefits, but Austria stands to suffer because of its 850-mile frontier with Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. Once the frontiers are open, up to 300,000 foreign workers are forecast to move to Austria. A long transition period must be imposed on the new states to stop a flood of people and cheap farm produce, say the

Austrians. "We have to recognise the special fears of the people. Austria has the longest land borders with Eastern Europe," said Herr Klima.

The Government's response to popular fears has been spurred by the success of Jörg Haider and his right-wing Austrian Freedom Party. Though damaged of late by a party corruption scandal, Herr Haider is sounding a popular note with his warnings of the danger to Austria from a rapid EU expansion.

Sitting yesterday in the café of Vienna's Imperial Hotel, he rapped home the message. "If we open the border, we will have a wave of immigrants coming in to take the jobs of Austrians. This has to be cleared up before enlargement." The Government had indicated this week that it wanted a ten-year transition period before Hungarians, Czechs and the others could freely cross present EU frontiers. Herr Haider's party, which has the backing of about a quarter of the population, believes the period should be from 15 to 20 years.

Herr Haider said: "We are in a very difficult situation. Having the presidency we are obliged to enforce enlargement." Government ministers last night dismissed Herr Haider as yesterday's man.



Viktor Klima, the Austrian Chancellor, wants the EU to expand but fears a flood of migrants across the frontiers with Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovenia

WORLD SUMMARY Kiryenko tax reform approved

Moscow: The Russian Government yesterday overcame the first hurdle in its efforts to secure parliamentary approval for a series of austerity measures aimed at overcoming the current economic crisis (Robin Lodge writes).

The State Duma approved the first reading of a Bill cutting taxes on profits from 35 per cent to 30 per cent, part of a major overhaul of the tax system aimed at reducing the widespread practice of evasion and profit concealment.

But despite an appeal to the assembly from Sergei Kiriyenko, the Prime Minister, for swift endorsement of the Government's recovery programme, the deputies made it plain that they were in no hurry and would consider each aspect of the austerity package on its merits.

Rebels say they killed singer

Algiers: The Armed Islamic Group (GIA) has claimed responsibility for the killing of Marouf Lounes, the Berber singer, according to a statement from the group. The murder last week of the singer, an outspoken democrat and critic of Islamist rebels, sparked riots in which at least four Berber protesters were killed and scores wounded. At least five more people were killed in two bomb attacks in Algiers and Medea. (Reuters)

German amnesia

Hamburg: Nearly a third of Germans aged 14 and 18 have never heard of the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz and 12 per cent believe Hitler survived the Second World War, a Forsa Institute survey found. Fifty-nine per cent of the 506 polled had never heard of the Kristallnacht pogroms against Jewish property and synagogues in 1938. (AFP)

Full house blues

Tirana: Bingo and alcohol were cited as the deciding factor in half of all divorce cases lodged in Albanian courts over the past three months. Adultery and violence accounted for under a third of all complaints. (Reuters)

Galina Brezhnev, wild woman of the stagnant years, dies at 69

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW



Galina embraces her father Leonid Brezhnev on his 70th birthday in 1976. They shared a love of fast cars

THE death of Galina Brezhnev, the daughter of the former Soviet leader, has revived memories of her extravagant lifestyle and love affairs during the so-called "era of stagnation" in the 1970s.

Galina, who was 69, is understood to have suffered a stroke and died on Tuesday in a Moscow hospital.

During Leonid Brezhnev's heyday, Galina enjoyed her privileged status to the full. She shared her father's love for fast cars and could be seen driving at high speed around Moscow in a Mercedes. Such a sight would turn heads in today's new Russia — Moscow is said to have more Mercedes than Berlin — but in those

days any imported car, let alone a luxury model, was a rarity.

By the mid-1970s she had gained a reputation as a hostess of wild parties that often progressed into bacchanalia, with couples entwined on floors as the vodka and champagne flowed. While not graced with the best of looks — indeed, she bore an unenvying close resemblance to her father — this did not apparently deter her from satisfying what was reputed to be a voracious sexual appetite.

At 22, she ran off with an acrobat, beginning an association with the circus that lasted for many years. Her most notorious association was with a magician, whom she married only to have their union annulled three days later on the orders of her enraged father. Brezhnev was also reported to

have dismissed the man who officiated at the wedding.

For a brief period she appeared to have settled down, after her marriage to a policeman, Yuri Churbanov, then head of the KGB. In his own brief tenure as Soviet leader, he began the process of rooting out corruption among the party elite.

It was this process that led to the arrest of Churbanov for embezzlement and taking bribes. In 1988 he was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment with the confiscation of property. Galina was left virtually destitute. But a court ruling in 1990 ordered much of the property, including a country house and a Mercedes, returned to her, and she spent the rest of her days in relative wealth and comfort, living in a Moscow flat with her daughter and granddaughter, who survive her.

subsequently arrested and jailed for five years for smuggling.

The case was widely seen as being instigated by Yuri Andropov, then head of the KGB. In his own brief tenure as Soviet leader, he began the process of rooting out corruption among the party elite.

It was this process that led to the arrest of Churbanov for embezzlement and taking bribes. In 1988 he was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment with the confiscation of property. Galina was left virtually destitute. But a court ruling in 1990 ordered much of the property, including a country house and a Mercedes, returned to her, and she spent the rest of her days in relative wealth and comfort, living in a Moscow flat with her daughter and granddaughter, who survive her.

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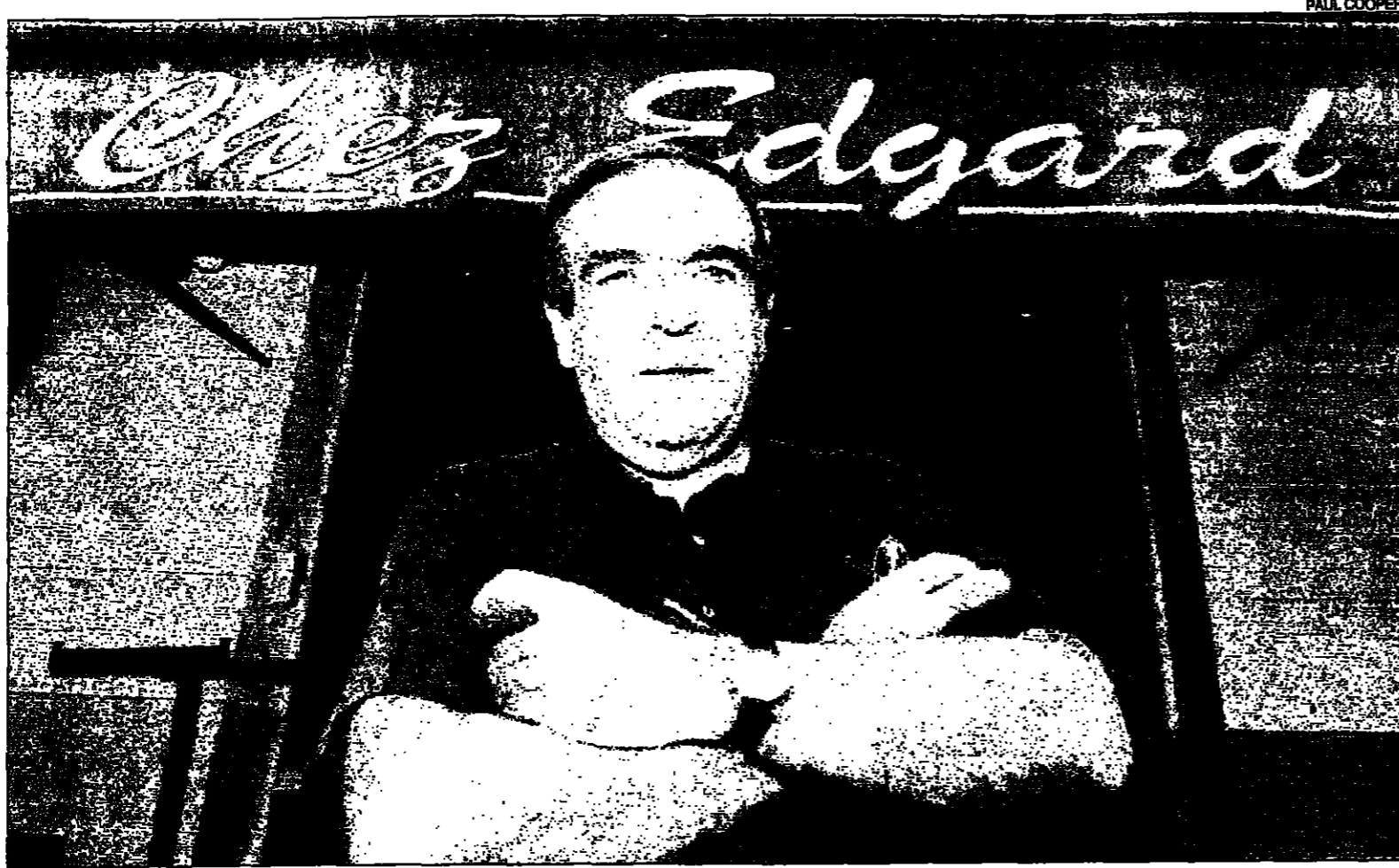
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Paul Benussa in front of his famed Paris restaurant, Chez Edgard, which he says he has been forced to close because of "too many taxes"

Restaurant with taste for intrigue is off the menu

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS



Jean Pierre Cassagne: Chez Edgard head chef

CHEZ EDGARD, the celebrated Paris restaurant where politicians have gathered for a generation to hatch plots, exchange gossip and gorge themselves, has been forced to close because of what its owner claims are the misguided economic policies of the Socialist Government.

Over the past 30 years the restaurant has been the setting for assignations, both political and romantic, and almost every French political and media figure has been spotted dining at Chez Edgard in Rue Marbeuf, off the Champs-Élysées.

Regular patrons include Jacques Delors, the former President of the European Commission, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the Finance Minister, and Philippe Séguin, the Gaullist leader.

The restaurant also attracted foreign notables: Sir Leon Britan was another familiar diner, Margaret Thatcher was known to drop in, and the Duchess of York and Diana, Princess of Wales, usually stopped there for lunch during shopping expeditions in Paris.

Despite its popularity, Chez Edgard has now fallen victim to fiscal repression, according to Paul Benussa, its flamboyant owner.

"There are too many taxes, and a 35-hour week that is impossible to put into effect... I have no choice but to cut my losses and shut up shop," M Benussa said at a farewell dinner on Tuesday night. Former Cabinet ministers, presidential advisers and media personalities were among the 200 guests supping on a vaudeville menu of *salade de crevettes aux asperges*, *tartare de saumon* and *noisette d'agneau*, all served with a dollop of nostalgia.

From time to time, in conversation at a corner table with associates and women other than his wife.

"The day Pierre Bérégovoy was appointed Prime Minister, he turned up on the stroke of 1.40 without a reservation. The place was full, so we stuck him on a pedestal table in the corridor," M Benussa recalled. The former Prime Minister did not hold a grudge. Soon afterwards, in 1992, he booked the restaurant for his birthday party.

M Benussa insists that despite the continuing fame of his establishment he has been driven towards closure by crippling taxes, the Socialist Government's efforts to cut the working week to 35 hours and what he claims is discrimination against traditional restaurants in favour of fast-food outlets. For all his politico-gastronomic clout, he could not persuade the authorities to alter tax rates.

"Fast food enjoys a VAT rate of 5.5 per cent, while restaurants have to pay 20.6 per cent. How can we be expected to survive? For three years I have battled to get a reduced rate of 14 per cent, but I have not been listened to," he said.

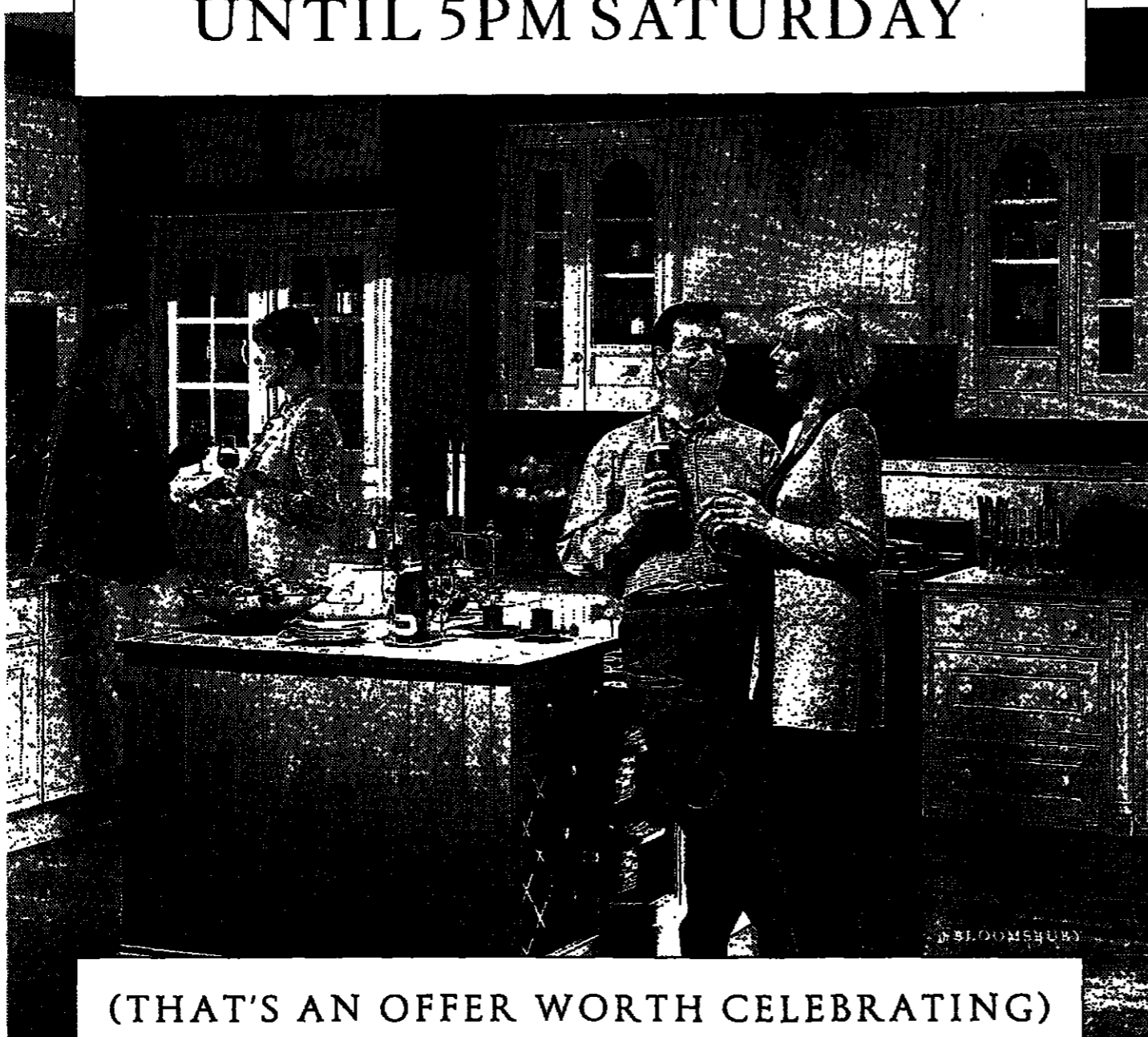
Several other restaurants are already squaring up to succeed Chez Edgard as the *venue du jour* for political title-tattle, alliance-forging and back-stabbing. Among the main contenders are the Brasserie Lipp, Chez Françoise and Ledoyen.

To try to recoup some of his losses, M Benussa has decided to sell off the crockery and cutlery as mementos, in the words of one commentator, of "true and false confidences, small flirtations and even the whiff of corruption".

Leading article, page 25

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Orang-utans in danger of extinction from forest fires

BY HELEN RUMBELOW

ORANG-UTANS will die out in 20 years unless the new Indonesian Government can stop companies from setting fire to forests, primate experts said yesterday.

The endangered great ape, one of Man's closest relatives, has also become one of our most traumatised victims, said the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), which reports that more than 1,000 orang-utans died in forest fires this year as a result of former President Suharto's corrupt regime.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Orang-utan Foundation also said yesterday that at the present rate the apes will be either extinct or "non-viable" within 20 years.

Half of the ape's number, whose name means "man of the forest", have been wiped out in the past decade and numbers are now probably well below the 16,000 estimated five years ago.

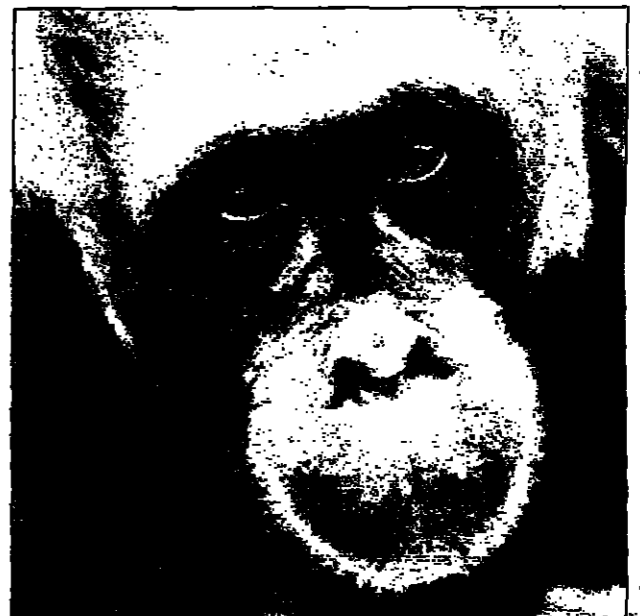
But the Indonesian Government of the past 32 years has sacrificed the orang-utans to quick monetary gain by letting cash crop producers burn precious forest at will, said Steve Trent, campaigns director for EIA. Orang-utans are either left to die in the flames, sold as pets or hunted for food.

Devastating fires that raged from last autumn until a month ago razed eight million acres of tropical forest, the size of England and Wales, but half that amount continues to be lost every year to land-clearing fires started by palm oil and timber companies.

The Suharto Government blamed the inferno on a combination of the drying effects of El Niño and slash and burn agriculture, but Mr Trent said satellite tracking shows that 80 per cent of fires are started by a handful of powerful companies, who have friends or relatives in government and so act as if above the law.

"Orang-utan habitat is being deliberately destroyed by companies clearing the land to get rich quick. The situation is critical, laws are routinely flouted by major companies and bribery and corruption are the norm," Mr Trent said.

A WWF spokesman said: "Orang-utans are in big trouble. They are more vulnerable than they have ever been and the Indonesian Government is public enemy number one."



Fires have killed more than 1,000 orang-utans this year

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Guerrillas in Kosovo 'killed mine hostages'

FROM TOM WALKER IN HADE

NINE Serb hostages held by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) are believed to have been murdered as Serb forces recaptured a crucial coalmine which had been taken by ethnic Albanian rebels.

The Serb-run media centre in Pristina yesterday succeeded — at the third attempt — in taking journalists into the opencast Belacevac mine, proving that for the moment, at least, Kosovo's coal are growing fears, however.

There are growing fears, however, that the Yugoslav Army and police bombardment of Belacevac and the nearby KLA command centre of Hade has been at the cost of the lives of nine Serb mineworkers. They were kidnapped by the guerrillas last week at the start of the ten-day mine saga.

A police lieutenant, Zoran Janic, showed reporters a snaking, 200-yard KLA trench dug round the hilltop crest by Hade. The fortifications looked down on Obilic village, the Kosovo A and B power stations and the Dobro Selo mine. Lieutenant Janic described how it took Serb police more than 24 hours to advance up the hill: what he left unsaid is that the ascent was obviously made possible only by a continuous bombardment of Hade

from the opposite direction by Yugoslav Army mortar and cannon fire.

Lieutenant Janic said there had been no police casualties. The guerrillas appeared to have abandoned the village hurriedly; meals were left eaten in the bunkers and a game of pool had been left unresolved. "If they had casualties, they took them with them," he said.

Why the Serbs took so long to recapture a major state asset remains a mystery, but a senior policeman described how negotiations to free the hostages had broken down. He refused to say whether he believed they were still alive, but a local miner, Nebojsa Jankovic, said: "We've been told they were all executed when the action started." The anonymous officer claimed that his Albanian sources had told him the Serbs had been forced to dig the KLA trenches.

Veljko Odalovic, Kosovo's Serb governor, predicted more Serb offensives will begin soon, among them an operation to retake the Pristina-Pec highway — which would include ending the KLA siege of Kijevo, the police checkpoint and village cited by Richard Holbrooke, the US envoy, as the province's most loaded tripoint.



A Serb policeman guards the undamaged mosque at Hade, the hilltop village in Kosovo recaptured from the KLA on Tuesday

Nato fear of taking sides takes heat off Milosevic

By LAWRENCE FRIEDMAN

COMMENTARY

ACCORDING to the conventional wisdom, so long as Nato does not interfere, Serb forces will keep control of the troubled province of Kosovo without having to make any concession to the ethnic Albanians who make up the bulk of the population. It is therefore not surprising that, as the odds have shifted against Nato intervention, the Serb leader Slobodan Milosevic has shown scant interest in a political settlement.

His forces have just noched up an important success in retaking a coalmine, vital to local energy supplies, from fighters of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). But the conflict itself shows no sign of subsiding. The Kosovans continue to press for independence.

The task of Richard Holbrooke, the American mediator, has not been helped by the split between the Kosovans' non-violent official leadership and the militant, if rather amorphous, KLA. This has made it difficult to establish what sort of compromise might work.

It has also added to the caution of the Western leaders. They are wary of becoming de facto allies of the KLA. As Amnesty International has observed, the KLA has also been responsible for some vicious attacks on civilians. Support for secessionists comes firmly under the heading of a dangerous precedent in a part of the world where the tendency towards fragmentation is powerful.

The intractability of the problem and the hazardous nature of any military intervention has led Nato to stay its hand. The general view among the European members of the alliance is that a UN Security Council resolution is required before any military action can be authorised. It is apparent that Russia will not allow this.

The two obvious legal bases for a Nato intervention — the provision of humanitarian assistance to a victimised population and the prevention of a conflict spreading into neighbouring states that are themselves unstable — have been complicated by the increasing scale of KLA operations.

Airstrikes against Serb units harassing villages would encourage the KLA without turning the tide of the conflict. While a Nato force on the Albanian and Macedonian borders might guard

against hot pursuit by Serb forces, it would also be obliged to prevent KLA movements into Kosovo.

But just because Nato holds back, Mr Milosevic does not have a free hand. He now has a real civil war on his hands. There is no reason to doubt that his forces can prevail in set-piece encounters with the Kosovo Liberation Army, which is not a disciplined force. But in a long-term guerrilla campaign the advantage should move to the KLA. It has the support of the local population, plenty of volunteers, and a sanctuary and source of weaponry across the border in Albania.

For the Serb leadership the risk is that they will be unable to protect their own people in Kosovo from "ethnic cleansing", while their conscript forces could soon become demoralised and frustrated in the face of constant attacks.

If this assessment is correct, then Mr Milosevic has a real incentive to cut an early deal. If a deal remains elusive, then conflict is destined to become even more bitter and widespread.

To address that threat would require sending in troops in tens of thousands. The main effect of this prospect is to inject a sense of urgency into Western diplomacy. If this fails, then it will be no longer possible to defer some hard decisions.

Lawrence Friedman is Professor of War Studies at King's College London



Milosevic incentive to cut an early deal

Gucci suspect disrupts trial

Rome: The accused murderer of Maurizio Gucci screamed and complained of loneliness in a Milan courtroom yesterday as a police informer described how bugging equipment was used to trap the gang of hitmen allegedly hired by Patrizia Reggiani, the so-called "Black Widow" who was the fashion mogul's former wife (John Phillips writes).

"I can't stand it any more. I have been in prison for 18 months far away from my family," yelled Benedetto Ceraulo from the prisoners' cage. "It's all because of the stories that bastard made up."

Signor Ceraulo's outburst came as Gabriele Carpanese, a bankrupt restaurant owner, told the court how he had learnt of the plot to kill Gucci.

In 1994 Signor Carpanese was staying at a Milan hotel where another alleged member of the gang, Ivano Savioni, was working as a porter. Signor Carpanese said that he had agreed to help Signor Savioni to extort money from a businessman and, subsequently, the porter had confided that he was one of those involved in the 1995 murder of Gucci.

"In 1996 Savioni told me he had organised the Gucci murder... he said that everything had been ordered by Patrizia Reggiani," Signor Carpanese said.

Signor Ceraulo then interrupted the evidence again, denying that he had ever seen Signor Carpanese. The judge ordered that he be led to the cells.

Once peace had been restored, Signor Carpanese told the court that he had informed the Carabinieri paramilitary police of his discovery.

He had agreed to plant microphones in cars used by the gang to record conversations.

Letters reveal thoughts of Oklahoma bomber

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

CHILLING new insights into the deep anti-government anger of Timothy McVeigh, the Oklahoma City bomber, were revealed yesterday.

The breaking point of his hatred was said to have occurred in 1991, four years before the bombing that killed 168 people, when he failed to meet the rigorous physical standards to qualify for the US Army's Special Forces, the American equivalent of the SAS. In letters to his family, he raged against the "evil king" government that he claimed would have required him to engage in officially sanctioned assassinations and drug trafficking.

In a letter to his sister, Jennifer, he

said he learnt of these undercover deeds during briefings at Fort Bragg, the Special Forces training camp in North Carolina. He wrote: "We would be helping the CIA fly drugs into the US to fund many covert operations. Military consultants were to work hand-in-hand with civilian police agencies to 'quiet' anyone who was deemed a 'security risk'."

He urged his sister not to spread these allegations as she could seriously endanger his life.

These details, and the fact that McVeigh's family knew of his inner torment long before the bombing, were uncovered during an investigation by The New York Times. The newspaper said that his family suspected him

almost immediately after the Alfred P. Murrah federal building in Oklahoma was destroyed. He has been sentenced to death for the crime, the worst act of terrorism committed in America.

New glimpses are offered of McVeigh's suspected ties to other anti-government militants, although the FBI never established that they were linked to him operationally in terrorist plotting. A prison guard in Kingman, Arizona, where the itinerant McVeigh picked up his mail, told the FBI that he had seen him with ten to 15 others dressed in camouflage in the desert north of the town. The group had firearms spread over the bonnet of an old tan or yellow estate car.

The description could fit the vehicle

owned by Terry Nichols, who was convicted of conspiracy in the bombing and is serving a life sentence without parole. The guard also saw the arrival of Lori and Michael Fortier, both of whom he had known since school days. Michael Fortier pleaded guilty to failing to warn authorities of the bombing plot and is serving 12 years after testifying against McVeigh.

In yesterday's account, McVeigh's father William portrayed his son as a bright person who could never quite succeed in school or at sports. As an adult, Mr McVeigh said, his son bounced from job to job because he could not stand pressure, take orders or handle responsibility. In one letter, McVeigh disclosed that in 1993 he contemplated suicide.

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Pakistan 'had plan for first strike on India'

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

AMERICAN officials said yesterday that the FBI had interviewed a defectoring Pakistani nuclear physicist who claims Islamabad asked its scientists to prepare for a first nuclear strike against India.

Ifkhar Chaudhry Khan, who is seeking asylum in the United States, has told agents in New York that he had feared that the Government was considering a nuclear attack on Indian targets.

Mr Khan is prepared to provide detailed information about the Pakistani nuclear programme and the assistance given by China to build a reactor that produces plutonium for nuclear weapons.

Mr Khan, who left Pakistan before the tests, arriving in New York at the end of May, said that he and four other scientists had decided to go after attending a top secret meeting in April that discussed the country's nuclear strategy in the wake of the militant Hindu party's ascent to power in India.

He is the only purported defector to have arrived in America and mystery surrounds the fate of the other four whom he claimed had fled to Britain. British diplomats in Washington said yesterday they had "drawn a blank" in attempts to discover

the whereabouts of the other purported defectors but were still looking into the matter.

The five, whom Mr Khan said had signed a protest letter against a first-strike by Pakistan, reportedly escaped despite attempts by Pakistan's inter-service intelligence agency to stop them.

Pakistani officials have denied that any scientists have left and called the allegations of plans for a pre-emptive strike against India "particularly malicious".

Gohar Ayub Khan, the Foreign Minister, earlier this week said he knew of no defections and described the report as far-fetched.

At 29, Mr Khan is unlikely to have been a senior official in the nuclear programme. But he has produced a copy of photo identification naming him as an assistant research officer with the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission at Khushab.

In an interview published yesterday by *USA Today*, he said a 50 megawatt reactor at Khushab has produced enough plutonium to make a nuclear weapon, but claimed that Pakistan's programme "still needs assistance from other countries".

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Police block anti-Jiang demonstrators in Hong Kong carrying a coffin with the date June 4, 1989, when Tiananmen protesters were massacred

Jiang stays upbeat in Hong Kong gloom

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN HONG KONG

NO FIREWORKS lit the sky over Hong Kong last night, and there was a dispirited sense that the territory is still heading downhill, at least in the economy, as low-key, low-cost celebrations were staged to mark the anniversary of its handover from Britain to China.

At a restrained ceremony, attended by President Jiang Zemin of China, Tung Chee

hwa, the Chief Executive, gave a grim assessment of the economic whirlwind that has hit the territory of 6.6 million people.

"Hong Kong has been dealt a severe blow and our people have suffered a lot," he said soberly, speaking in a heavily guarded stadium. The former shipping magnate pledged his administration would do its best to help the population overcome the difficulties caused by the East Asia financial crisis and "lead them on

the road to happiness". But for a now gloomy public hitherto used to shopping in brand-name boutiques, taking holidays abroad and driving expensive cars, Mr Tung's predictions of "a long, hard road to recovery, with no hope for an economic turnaround this year" was scarcely likely to lighten the atmosphere.

Opinion polls show Hong Kong residents, worried about growing unemployment and a tumbling stock market, believe Mr Tung and his administration have handled the crisis badly. Although the economic downturn was not of Hong Kong's making, there is a sense that the previous British administration would have managed it better than Mr Tung, who has seemed bumbling and indecisive, observers say.

In line with the downcast mood and the creeping austerity, fireworks displays, which lit the night sky for two successive nights at the glittering handover last year, were cancelled.

Apart from a few banners saying "Happy Anniversary", and the fact that this was a public holiday here, there were few signs that anything memorable was occurring. Many bars and restaurants where celebratory banquets were held a year ago and toasts drunk in champagne have closed down. There were few tourists around this year

compared to the handover crowds a year ago, given a massive tourism slump.

Hong Kong's capitalists might have been surprised when China's Communist leader began his speech at the anniversary ceremony: "Comrades, greetings to you." Comrade is not a word with much currency here.

But Mr Jiang, in celebrating the anniversary of Chinese rule, seemed to be trying to encourage the dispirited Mr Tung. "I am confident Hong

port for the Hong Kong dollar. Given the parlous state of China's own economy, they may be grasping at straws, analysts believe.

Observers say that, though there have been some subtle changes since the handover in Hong Kong's political life and some favours granted to Chinese institutions and personalities, Beijing has earned high marks for not interfering in Hong Kong's affairs in the overt way that was feared.

After Mr Jiang's arrival on Tuesday, police spotted and chased three gunmen near the venue where he was attending an anniversary banquet last night. But the gunmen, who escaped, were thought to be gangster Triad members taken by surprise rather than an assassination team.

Another group of demonstrators set fire to a mock coffin and battled with police as they tried to breach their lines outside a banquet attended by Mr Jiang. Fifty protesters attempted to throw the coffin over a police cordon outside the Hong Kong Exhibition and Conference Centre. After failing to penetrate the police blockade, they set the coffin alight.

Mr Jiang will attend the official opening ceremony today of Hong Kong's new £2 billion airport, returning to Beijing shortly afterwards, a few hours before President Clinton arrives in Hong Kong.

'A downcast mood and the creeping austerity have led to the fireworks displays being cancelled'

Kong will be able to overcome its difficulties, given its rich financial reserves, strong civil service and economic infrastructure," he said.

Ironically, many citizens of this capitalist enclave, who originally feared Beijing rule, are so disillusioned by their own post-handover administration that they see China as a source of economic security. This is especially so with Beijing's insistence that it will not devalue its own currency, the yuan, thus providing sup-

Clinton sticks to hard line on free trade for China

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN SHANGHAI

PRESIDENT CLINTON yesterday delivered a passionate speech in favour of free trade, but warned China that the US was not about to relax the terms on which his host could enter the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

China's membership "can only happen on strong terms, the same terms that other nations of the world abide by", Mr Clinton told business leaders in Shanghai. "Of course, there will have to be an individual agreement that recognises the transitions China must undertake, but the terms have to be clear and unambiguous."

His remarks will have dashed any hopes Chinese leaders might have entertained quietly that this trip, in which Mr Clinton has thrown himself fervently into debates at the heart of Chinese development, will have softened America's WTO position. Failure to make progress on the trade talks has been one of the acknowledged disappoint-

ments of the summit. But, given the strains which reform is about to place on China's economy, made worse by the Asian crisis, US aides say the stalemate is no surprise. The only immediate encouragement Mr Clinton could offer was that Congress appeared on the verge of renewing China's Most Favoured Nation status — the terms of trade granted most of America's trading partners. The annual vote is a constant source of annoyance to China.

The US is also offering to help to train Chinese workers made redundant from heavy industry plants that are closing across the country, as well as legal training to make courts more consistent.

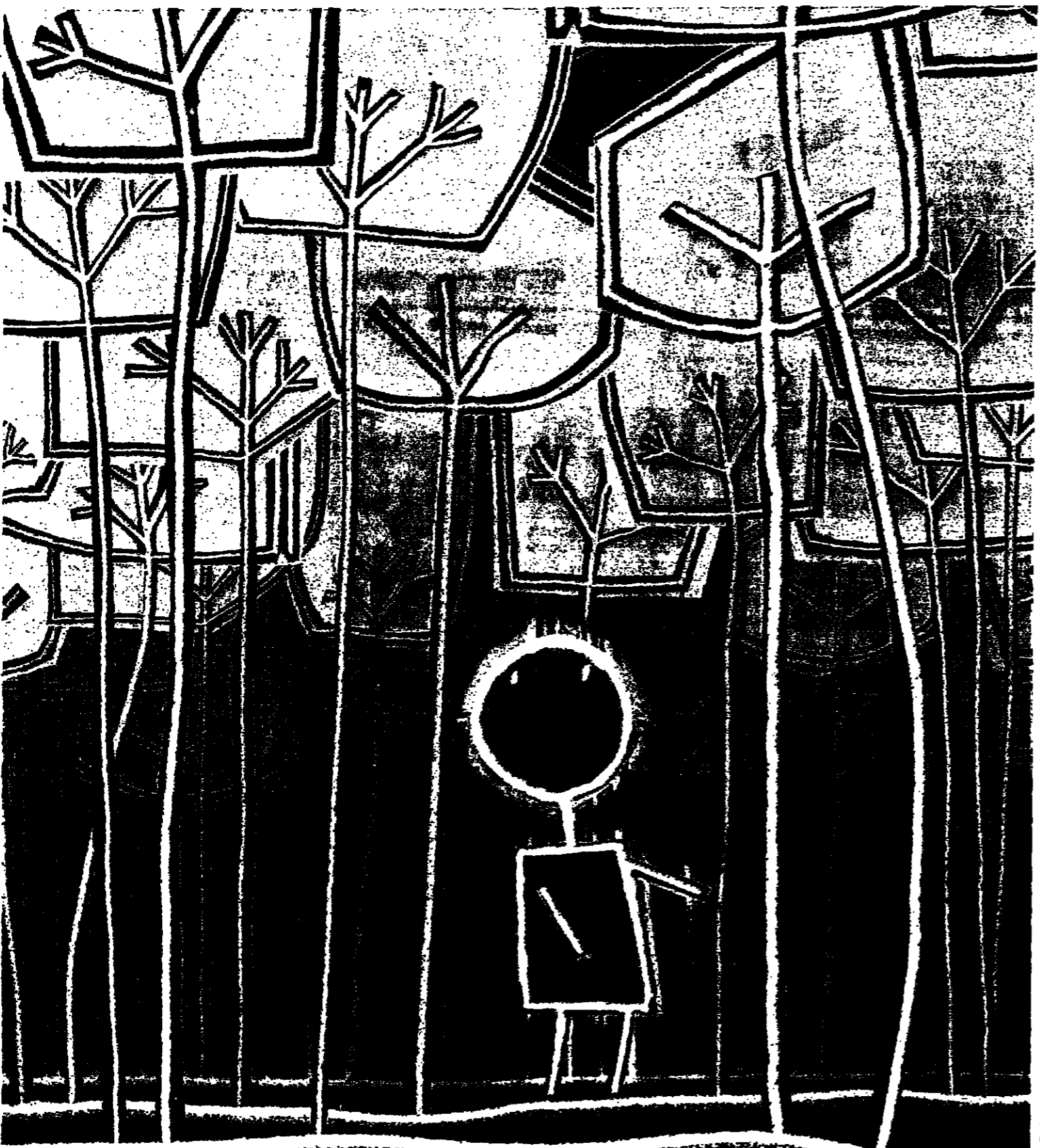
Mr Clinton's remarks came during a day examining China's most capitalist face, visiting Shanghai's Stock Exchange and meeting people who had bought their homes with mortgages. The Stock Exchange, filled with investment brokers dressed in the

severe dark suits that dominated money business before Wall Street discovered Hugo Boss, gave Mr Clinton his third appearance on Chinese television. The biggest surprise of the trip, he said, was that the Government had allowed live, nationwide broadcasts of his two key speeches on state television.

In his latest appearance, he denied that America's role as the sole superpower after the Cold War meant that it was "the world cop". And he said his daughter Chelsea was longing to come back because she found Shanghai so exciting. She spent part of Tuesday night dancing in Park 97, one of the city's hottest nightclubs.

Today, famous for his hairpin-shaped mountains or *karsts*, Mr Clinton will deliver a speech on the environment, a cause he has embraced on this trip as never before, then head for Hong Kong.

Risks and rewards, page 33



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UN chief lifts hopes of Abiola freedom

FROM SAM KILEY AND DAVID ORR IN LAGOS

KOFI ANNAN, the United Nations Secretary-General, has held secret talks with Chief Moshood Abiola, the jailed Nigerian pro-democracy leader, as part of a campaign to secure his release after four years in detention.

Diplomatic sources and members of the imprisoned leader's staff said yesterday that the talks were held soon after Mr Annan arrived in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, on Tuesday. Since then Mr Annan has met several times with General Abdulsalam Abubakar, the country's new leader, who has pledged to return Nigeria to civilian rule since he took over from Sani Abacha who died suddenly on June 8.

Officials said that the meeting between Chief Abiola, 61, and the UN chief was held in secret amid pressure from the military regime to persuade him to give up his claim to the presidency.

Chief Abiola, a billionaire businessman who turned to politics in the 1993 presidential campaign, was widely assumed to have won the elections five years ago. But the results were annulled by the then military leader, General Ibrahim Babangida.

Since 1994 he has been held in detention and given a death sentence for his alleged part in a coup plot aimed at deposing General Abacha, who took over from General Babangida after three months of civilian rule. His death sentence was later

struck down by the Nigerian High Court, which ordered his release in late 1994. But he has remained in solitary confinement in Abuja ever since.

Mr Annan, a citizen of Ghana, was the first non-Nigerian to have met Chief Abiola since his detention began. Chief Abiola was moved to a more comfortable villa inside the presidential compound at Aso Rock in Abuja last week when the military Government opened talks with him over the terms of his possible release.

Mr Annan's visit was probably aimed at trying to get him to renounce his claim to the presidency in return for a role in a new, civilian-led Nigerian dispensation after nearly four decades of successive military regimes.

Sources close to Chief Abiola, who has set up a clandestine method of communications with him, said that the talks were unresolved yesterday evening. But they hoped that his release would be announced by General Abubakar before the end of the week.

In Lagos, his supporters in the pro-democracy movement, many of whom have also spent years in jail and detention for supporting his claim to the presidency, continued to insist that he was the natural successor to a military Government. They said that they would accept nothing less.

A senior member of Chief Abiola's entourage, who has been in contact with him, said yesterday: "Abiola is not prepared to renounce his claim to the presidency. He was democratically elected and on that issue he remains firm."

However, Western support for Chief Abiola's hardline stand has been steadily eroded by General Abubakar over the past few weeks.

"I am happy with the response of the current leadership to the country's problems," Mr Annan said on national television in his first comments since arriving in Nigeria. "Nigeria is a country of very talented people which is a very important country as well in this region, and I believe that

a democratic leadership will bring out the best in the country."

Advisers to General Abubakar and many other sources said that he was considering a wide range of options for the future of politics in Nigeria. But all of them are aimed at getting the armed forces out of power as soon as possible.

"This may not mean that he endorses the claim of Abiola to the top job. But he is definitely sure, as are all of us, that the time has come for the military to return to the barracks," said one of the senior members of the Government.

Abuja: Presidents Kabbah of Sierra Leone and Taylor of Liberia were heading for Nigeria last night for a mini-summit with the country's new military leader and Mr Annan.

A senior official at the Sierra Leone Foreign Ministry said the meeting "is a worthwhile opportunity to discuss some regional issues bordering on security and co-operation". Liberian officials said part of the focus will be on the diplomatic row between that country and Sierra Leone.

Mr Kabbah, who was deposed in a 1997 coup but was returned to power earlier this year by a Nigerian-led West African intervention force, has accused Liberia of supporting rebels who continue to fight his Government. Liberia accuses Sierra Leone of harbouring rebels that want to depose President Taylor. (AP)



Abiola: will not renounce his claim to presidency



James Brolin and Barbra Streisand, who are expected to marry this week at the film star and singer's Malibu mansion, two years after they met

Marquee signals Streisand wedding

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

A GIANT white marquee, pitched on the grounds of Barbra Streisand's Malibu mansion at night, has been taken by the American media as incontrovertible proof that the actress will shortly get married.

The 55-year-old film star and singer has lived with James Brolin, 56, an actor, since 1996, when they met at a dinner party thrown by one of Ms Streisand's former lovers.

Yesterday — the second anniversary of their meeting — Dick Guttman, Ms Streisand's normally taciturn publicist, told the *New York Post*: "Yes, there will be a wedding later this week." He had been hounded by journalists after that huge tent was spotted on Tuesday, and reports that lorryloads of flowers, tables and chairs had been delivered to the mansion.

No sooner had the marquee been sited than media helicopters began to hover above Ms Streisand's estate in a frenzy of aerial "news-gathering". Mr Guttman said that Ms Streisand had requested the helicopters to leave the area after 2pm on the day of the wedding, "so that the sacred vows can be heard".

The big day, of course, has not been announced, although the guests are all reported to have been told that they should keep their diaries free of other engagements until Sunday.

Zimbabwe seeks £1.4bn to buy out white farmers

FROM JAN RAATH IN HARARE

ZIMBABWE announced yesterday that it would launch an appeal to Western governments later this year for £1.4 billion to redistribute more than 12 million acres of white-owned farms among blacks.

Joseph Msika, the chairman of President Mugabe's ruling Zanu(PF) party and head of the party-run committee responsible for listing white farms for confiscation, said it was planned to resettle 100,000 families on white land over the next five years.

Potential donors, including the British Government, will be invited to a conference here in September to discuss financial backing, he said.

But he made scant concession to international criticism of Mr Mugabe's moves since last November for a mass expropriation of white-owned land without proper compensation. "The donor conference is not convening to determine

whether or not Zimbabwe must reform its land system," Mr Msika said. "Government has already taken a policy decision."

The launch of the donors' conference came amid alarming signs of an uncontrollable wave of squatting, much of it officially inspired, according to government sources. On Monday about 60 families occupied a cattle ranch in the Odzi area, about 120 miles east of Harare, the third big squatter incident in a month.

At the weekend Mr Mugabe repeated his assertion that past British colonial policies were responsible for the explosive land issue. But an official record of the settlers on Pinewood farm in Marondera, bought in the late 1980s to resettle local peasants, gives an indication of the corruption that has bogged down land reform. They include relatives of

Mr Mugabe's new wife, Grace, the local district administrator, a senior official of the British charity, Save the Children, a police officer and various business people. Only five of the 17 large plots on the 1,500-acre farm are occupied by local peasant farmers.

The white farming community is still shaken by the formal listing in November of 1,470 farms for confiscation. About 170 of the listed farmers have offered their land to the Government, but nearly eight months later not one of these has been acquired.

A farmer in the Makonde area north of Harare has had his farm valued at Zim\$14 million (£480,000) by the state. But the agreement of sale has been on the desk of the Agriculture Minister, Kumbirai Kangai, for months. The farmer has since been made an offer by Mr Mugabe's nephew, Leo.

Netanyahu row with Weizman simmers on

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

PRESIDENT WEIZMAN of Israel and Binyamin Netanyahu, his Prime Minister, failed yesterday to reconcile bitter public differences over the stalled peace process that have plunged the country into a constitutional crisis.

Their 70-minute meeting, which did not end in the expected joint news conference, coincided with a warning from Yasser Arafat that the Palestinians had run out of patience and would defend annexed east Jerusalem against Israeli measures in "whatever way we can".

He said: "There will be no peace, no security, no stability without the return of liberated Jerusalem, the eternal capital for an independent Palestinian state, whether they like it or not."

The showdown between the two leaders began this week when Mr Weizman blamed Mr Netanyahu for the 16-month deadlock in the peace process and called for the general election scheduled for late 2000 to be held immediately. Mr Netanyahu angrily accused the President of exceeding his largely ceremonial authority, siding with Israel's dovish left-wing opposition parties and "collaborating" with the Arabs against Israeli interests.

At the end of yesterday's meeting, initiated by Mr Netanyahu, a terse joint statement said only that the two had agreed to stop arguing in public and to discuss their differences in private "for the good of the country".

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Tackling an ancient killer

Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies." John Keats's description of the final stages of tuberculosis has never been bettered. Keats knew all about the disease: although he abandoned his medical studies for poetry, he nursed his brother Tom until his death from pulmonary tuberculosis. Whether John was infected by Tom's *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* as a result of his devoted care, or whether both brothers were infected from a common source, will never be known.

Keats suffered the classic signs and symptoms of pulmonary tuberculosis. He had a terrible cough which kept him awake and accentuated the inevitable tiredness experienced by those who suffer from it. He coughed up blood, sweated throughout the nights, lost his appetite, grew pale with anaemia and "spectre-thin". He finally died in 1821 at a house in Rome in which his room overlooked the Spanish Steps. He had become so weakened by the disease that his devoted friend, the artist Joseph Severn, had to bring all his meals to his room. Keats tried to cut short what he described as his "posthumous life" with laudanum but Dr Clarke, who visited him many times a day, confiscated the bottle.

In the National Health Service era, doctors may make fewer home visits but modern medicine ensures a happier outcome. John Keats's case history is a good illustration of the course of the disease before BCG (bacille Calmette-Guérin) vaccination was available. If it had been, John could have nursed Tom without dire consequences, for if he had caught TB, a six-month course of three or four antibiotics would have scotched it. In Britain we are fortunate that careful treatment of tuberculosis has, in the main, kept the dreaded multi-antibiotic-resistant strains of the bacterium at bay.

The Health Education Authority, conscious that the rate of tuberculosis is no longer falling, has written to doctors with details of both the disease and BCG vaccination. In 1950, before antibiotics and BCG,



Dr Thomas Stuttford reports on TB; arthritis drugs; raspberry leaf tea and pregnancy; flour allergies; and skin cancer

there were about 50,000 cases a year in the United Kingdom, now there are 6,000. The all-time low was in 1987, and the minimal increase is thought to be attributable to better diagnosis and continuing immigration from parts of the world where TB is still rampant.

In the United Kingdom, there is also a scattering of cases which have occurred as the result of HIV. In other countries this is an important cause of antibiotic-resistant tuberculosis. The secret of treating the disease is to prevent resistance by using a combination of antibiotics and by ensuring that patients co-operate with their doctors and complete the courses of antibiotics prescribed.

The BCG vaccination would also have been useful in another literary setting: the Brontë household. The vaccination does not afford 100 per cent protection — probably somewhere between 70 and 80 per cent. It is particularly efficient at protecting people against the more serious forms of TB, so if it had been available in their day, at least some members of the Brontë family might have survived unscathed, while others would only have developed a milder chronic condition such as that suffered by the sisters' father, Patrick.

Babies likely to be exposed to TB from birth, like the Brontës, should be immunised at birth; other children should be vaccinated be-

tween the ages of ten and 14. At Haworth, Patrick Brontë's diary contains a very good account of his persistent and hacking cough; he, like many older people, seems to have reached a state of equilibrium with his TB, and the true cause of the cough was missed.

So why is BCG given at two different times — at birth for those at maximum risk, in later childhood for the rest? The basis for this advice is that the impact of BCG wanes after 15 years, and the risk of catching TB is greatest in early adulthood. Maximum protection is therefore assured by giving the BCG later. BCG is not usually recommended for those over the age of 45, as by then most people will have been exposed to TB naturally.

Skin tests will show whether someone has immunity. If the patient has resistance, either as a result of previous TB or BCG, the skin responds in seven days with a raised red reaction. A few children feel a bit dizzy after BCG, or have a more serious skin reaction.

Who should not have BCG? Those who are immuno-compromised, who have a high temperature or who have recently had other live vaccines (polio excepted). Some patients who are not allowed it might wish to go down the homeopathic route and discuss a tuberculinum nosode with their homeopath.



Charlotte Brontë's life might well have been saved if modern antibiotics had been available in her day

Helping bakers breathe a little easier

THE amiable, chubby-faced baker at work among his ovens is a theme beloved by advertising agencies. The reality may be less romantic but a picture of a wheezing, tired worker suffering from baker's dermatitis, eczema and itch would not boost sales.

Recently, *Annals of Occupational Hygiene*, quoted in *The Occupational Health Review*, has analysed the factors that determine the amount of inhalation of flour dust of any particular worker and any possible response to the allergens in the wheat.

The likelihood of a bakery worker suffering heavy exposure to wheat allergens depended on the job and type of bakery. Thereafter, the effect on the person's health, in particular their respiratory system and skin, must be dependent on individual variations in susceptibility. The quality of the bakery is all-important: the Romans realised this and baths were available so that bakers could wash dust from their skins. However, by the 17th century the bakers baked by night and slept by day.

Their condition was appalling, a contemporary medical text says, "owing to the disuse of baths, dirty filth sticks to the workman's skin. Bakers are shut up in the daytime like owls to take their rest". Not surprisingly, they itched appallingly.

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Arthritis treatment takes a heavy toll

THE gardens of The Old Rectory, at Stanton Prior, near Bath, are looking their best at this time of the year but conversation last weekend wasn't only about the roses. Two people from the district had recently been dangerously ill following a heavy gastrointestinal bleed after they had taken anti-rheumatic medication.

The most common group of preparations used to treat arthritis and other inflammatory conditions is the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). These drugs relieve pain and stiffness, reduce inflammation and allow patients to sleep and to carry on with their lives. They are hugely prescribed and are available over the counter.

The average GP has more than 200 patients with arthritis, nearly 80 per cent of whom have been treated with NSAIDs. But no drug is without side-effects. With NSAIDs, 12,000 patients develop serious side-effects every year and about 2,000 die annually with these drugs, a similar mortality to that associated with asthma or carcinoma of the cervix. An average GP will have a death in his practice every six years through use of these drugs.

Not all patients are at equal risk. Those over 65 are more likely to suffer from gastrointestinal ulcers or acute erosion of the gastrointestinal lining through use of anti-arthritis drugs, although this is the age group that needs them most.

People who already have a tendency to ulcers may be at risk. However, there are some sinister aspects to the reaction to NSAIDs. Sometimes a person who has taken them for years without trouble suddenly succumbs, or another who previously had guts of iron, may bleed after the first tablets.

Risk is reduced if they are always taken with fluids after a meal and while standing up, and the patient should not lie flat for half an hour. Another effect of NSAIDs is that the bleed may occur without warning and be the first symptom. Usually, heavy gastrointestinal bleeding happens to those who have had a warning in

the form of threatening pain. Disaster can strike out of blue after NSAIDs.

Although there is no such preparation as a safe NSAID, there are safer products. The addition of Misoprostol to the prescription for one of these drugs reduces the incidence of erosion, ulceration and bleeding. Voltarol retard can be obtained ready-mixed with Misoprostol in Arthrotec tablets. Mobic is also safer than NSAIDs but it, like Arthrotec, is safer but not entirely safe. Patients who are taking NSAIDs regularly, particularly if they are over 65, should have regular renal function blood tests. One group of patients which should not take Arthrotec, Cytotec,

Napratec, or any other drug containing Misoprostol, is pregnant women, those intending pregnancy or those lactating. Misoprostol in large quantities may cause an abortion and a recent report in *The Lancet* suggests that where it is used as an abortifacient it has caused abnormalities in those babies who have survived.

Special care is also needed by women of reproductive age to make certain that their contraceptive measures are adequate. There is hope that a new generation of anti-rheumatic drugs, the Cox-2, will soon be available. Until they are, patients should only continue to take them under medical supervision.

Mother nature's fruity little helper

ALTHOUGH the ancient Irish herbalist K'EOGH recommended raspberry flowers and fruit for inflammation of the eyes, to treat boils and as a stimulant for the heart, an even older use has been in pregnancy. Herbalists recommend raspberry leaves during the last ten weeks of pregnancy as they are supposed to ensure an easier childbirth with regular but less painful contractions.

Kate Aldridge's mother in *The Archers*, however, was wise to caution against them as their influence on the uterine muscle has been blamed for causing early delivery. Perhaps if Kate had listened, her baby would not have been born in the mud of Glastonbury but in the comfort of Ambridge. As would be expected, Morwenna, the earth mother character, approved of raspberry leaves.

Herbal Medicines. A Guide for Healthcare Professionals, published by The Pharmaceutical Press with the support of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, quotes tests in animals that have confirmed the efficacy of raspberry leaves in inducing labour. Similarly, in the laboratory, human uterine muscle when stimulated will contract more readily when exposed to an extract of raspberry if the woman from which it was obtained had been pregnant.

The guide recommends that raspberry may be given under medical supervision during labour to ease delivery but should not be used during pregnancy unless the patient is at term.

Sometimes when it has induced labour the contractions, although regular, have been more feeble than might otherwise have been the case.



Raspberry leaves should be used only during labour

Lamp has a magical effect

CHRISTIE'S Hospital in Manchester, which has an international reputation as a cancer hospital, is investigating the use of a photo-dynamic skin cancer treatment lamp.

The Manchester lamp has already replaced lasers in the treatment of many superficial cancers. It is quicker, cheaper and so painless that many patients have felt nothing.

Dr Colin Whitehurst, of Christie's Hospital, said: "It is not only cheap but also efficient. More than 400 people have been successfully treated and had the results checked by biopsy. The lamp doesn't even cause increased skin temperature and there is no scarring or skin damage, not so much as a white patch."

The lamp works by channeling an arc of pure, concentrated light through a series of lenses on to skin which has been rubbed with a cream. This has been left on for two to four hours to increase photosensitivity.

The light has been used to treat 95 per cent of skin

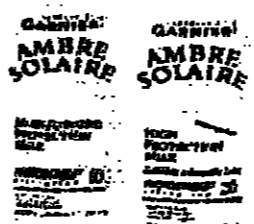
cancers, including rodent ulcers (basal cell carcinomas) and Bowen's disease of the skin. It has also been used in gynaecology to deal with early, malignant changes in the vulva and on the cervix and has proved effective against colo-rectal polyps. It has not been applied to malignant melanomas but has been effective against benign moles.

Dr Whitehurst is soon to take his machine to India, where oral cancers are common, as the lamp's cheapness and ease of use might revolutionise difficult procedures.



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Under-age and over the limit

The case of a 14-year-old girl who fell to her death while drunk has highlighted the fact that alcohol abuse among young people is on the rise. **Bill Frost and Francesca Alberry report**

Few of us can fail to recall our first youthful brush with alcohol: the inane giggling, the false sense of confidence and then, inevitably, nausea. Just a couple of pints of beer, perhaps a few glasses of wine were all that was required.

But times have changed. What was once a harmless rite of passage has become a potentially lethal search for oblivion among the young.

While once parents could say with confidence that alcohol consumption was restricted to the occasional glass at a party, now they must consider a far more sinister prospect: widespread and regular abuse is rampant.

Jennifer Gelardi was one of the brightest and the best at Millfield, the Somerset public school where she died. The 14-year-old fell from a roof after a vodka party to celebrate what turned out to be her last birthday. An inquest heard of a drinking culture at the school, and that Jennifer had been quiet and withdrawn; alcohol gave her confidence and won her friends. On the day she died she was three times over the drink-drive limit after asking an older pupil to buy a bottle of vodka to "liven up the celebrations".

Irrespective of class or education, our young are drinking more heavily than ever before. Health education campaigns and lectures are largely ignored, and perhaps only parents themselves can reverse the trend — they must lead by example. The stories their children tell should be enough to convince even the most cynical adult that there is a problem.

As his head began to spin and his stomach churned, Giles Eaton (not his real name) stared bleakly at the empty champagne bottle and realised he was going to be sick and disgrace himself. Perhaps it was drinking on an empty stomach, perhaps the heat in the marquee, he said after being carried home drunk from the wedding reception. It never occurred to Giles that, at 13, he was a little young to be drinking Bollinger preceded by "a couple of glasses of Pimm's".

While he nursed a hangover at the family home in Gloucestershire last weekend, his parents decided to seek help — their son's drinking was no longer a problem they could ignore.

Now recovered from the hangover, Giles refuses to acknowledge that he has been

caught up in the pernicious culture of teenage binge drinking. His drunken performance at the wedding reception — the child was found comatose beneath a table, covered in his own vomit — was "just a bit of a laugh, something we all do, given the chance".

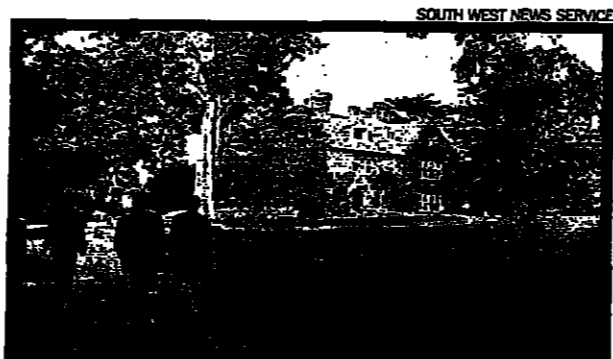
Giles, bright, musical and from an affluent background, began drinking two years ago, about the same time he shared his first joint with an older boy. Cannabis did not suit him, but wine and spirits — always available in the family home — did.

"Sure, I got sick a couple of times; after a time you just get out of it, that's the object of the exercise. All my friends are the same, it's what you do," he says with no hint of bravado.

Until last weekend, his parents, Olivia and Charles, felt it was just "a phase every child goes through"; now they are "desperately worried" and have booked an appointment for Giles with their GP, asked to see his teachers and are considering family therapy. Olivia is worried that he may have been influenced by seeing his parents drink "a bottle of wine" with meals. "You wonder whether that provides a bad example," she says. "It worries us that we failed to notice he was helping himself to the odd drink when we were not around."

Charles is more angry than frightened among our children is more prevalent than we knew. And it's binge drinking, that's the real worry.

His fears are well-founded. Recent government statistics



Millfield School, where Jennifer Gelardi fell to her death

show that last year 1,000 children under 15 were admitted to hospital suffering from acute alcohol poisoning, and the figure is rising fast. Jane, a 16-year-old from southwest London who has

just sat nine GCSEs and is expected to go on to university, describes herself as "a sensible drinker". She "knows her limits" but admits to buying regularly bottles of spirits with the sole intention of getting drunk. "I don't do it on my own. I feel more secure in a group. We look after each other, the sober ones make sure those the worse for wear do not come to any harm."

"People experiment a lot younger now because we are maturing earlier and have more money and freedom. I first drank wine at home when I was 11; two years later I looked old enough to buy drink for myself."

"Supermarkets and corner shops are quite easy. I do not have fake identification but if

I needed to get some, I could."

Does Jane see any risk attached to alcohol? "Not really; it's less dangerous than tobacco or soft drugs. My only real worry is throwing up, it's so horrible, so embarrassing."

Amanda, 15, also from southwest London, hopes to win a place at art school. She does not like spirits but drinks them anyway. Her parents have no idea she spends her allowance on vodka and fruit juice mixers to mask the flavour of the alcohol. "I am not worried about becoming a drunk," she says. "I don't really need alcohol, I use it to enhance an evening out with my friends."

ging teachers would have any influence, she says. "A bad experience might have an effect, if I had an accident, say, while under the influence."

"The reason educated young people drink more today is the fear of recreational drugs. You can sleep off a drink but the effects of LSD can last a lifetime."

Sarah, 16, also spends much of her pocket money on vodka. The two girls — who attend the same school — are bright, attractive and yet apparently unaware of the dangers of alcohol abuse.

"I feel mature enough to be able to handle a drink. After all, at 16 I am legally allowed to get married and start a family. It seems absurd that I could not drink at my own wedding. I can handle alcohol better than many adults — I know when to stop."

Without exception, the girls mocked the Government's latest initiative to prevent the "awful consequences" of teenage drinking and drug abuse. A parents' guide launched this week by Tessa Jowell, the Public Health Minister, was described variously as "patronising", "more of the same old nanny state rubbish" and "a waste of the rainforest".

The comments came as the Health Education Authority decided to update a guide after figures showed that 96 per cent of children had tried alcohol by the age of 15. The average weekly amount of alcohol consumed by 11 to 15-year-olds doubled between 1990 and 1996, studies have shown.

The Government's drugs czar, Keith Hellawell, said he hoped the guide would break down some of the myths surrounding the subject and make parents realise that drinking can lead to drugs.

"We are seeing that young people who regularly drink alcohol are 22 times more likely to go on to use drugs. The link between alcohol and drugs is very close."

Gary Ward of the Health Education Authority speaks of "a binge culture. Parents have an important role — they can set an example. Do not tell your children they cannot drink while drinking too much yourself."

"Teach them that drinking in moderation is fine but getting wrecked is stupid. Be down-to-earth, accept that a little experimentation is acceptable but step in if you suspect regular binge drinking. Above all, lead from the front. The young can smell a hypocrite from 1,000 miles."

A long history of dignity in defeat

From the battlefield of Hastings to the football pitch of St-Etienne, the British have always displayed a 'blessed decency' in the face of disaster, writes Jason Cowley

Reading the headlines in yesterday's tabloids — "Huddle's Braves", "So Cruel", "Heroes", "The End of the World" — you could be forgiven for thinking that England had narrowly failed to win the World Cup rather than unluckily going out in the second round. The tabloids, as usual, spoke with the popular voice of the nation: the morning after the night before was, at least in England, an occasion of remarkable solemnity.

There were no hysterics, no complaints. Some of us grumbled about the referee, a couple of expletives were lobbed in the direction of the hapless David Beckham; but on the whole we were doing what we do best: accepting defeat with grace and dignity. British Airways even offered to fly the squad home from France on Concorde. It's hard to think what might have happened if we had reached the final. Glenn Huddle set the tone in the immediate aftermath of

the penalty shoot-out. Refusing to criticise those who missed their penalties, his voice cracking with emotion, he spoke of destiny and of his team defending like lions. The next morning he pleaded for David Beckham not to be made a "scapegoat", suggesting that his recklessness deserved no more than a caution. Argentina's manager, Daniel Passarella, caught the mood. England, he said, pushed his team to the edge: "What English spirit!"

Imagine how different the response would have been in Italy and Argentina, countries that expect — and often win — football matches — to be often merciless in defeat; or indeed in Colombia, where the defender Andrés Escobar was murdered for scoring



Major: courteous exit

grace under pressure. And that is exactly how we seem to like our losers — shed a few tears, if you want, but not too many; grumble about malign design, if you must, but then go make a cup of tea and start all over again. Just as "young" Michael Owen plans to do. He had to be consoled by his Liverpool team-mate Steve McManaman after the game in St Etienne, but within half an hour he had composed himself and was speaking of the challenges ahead, such as the new season with Liverpool.

Would we expect anything different? This, after all, is a country where Stephen Pile's *The Book of Heroic Failures* is a perennial bestseller, and where John Major made a speech outside Downing Street the morning after losing the general election in which he said: "The second reason I shall say no more is that I hope Norma and I will be able, with the children, to get to the Oval in time for lunch and for some cricket this afternoon."

His predecessor, Margaret Thatcher, also left office with considerable dignity in the face of public humiliation. Brought down from within her own party, Baroness Thatcher for once allowed a chink of humanity to show in her formidable armour, by weeping as she got into her car after delivering her final speech outside Downing Street. The previous afternoon she had been magnificent in the Commons, at one stage shouting out "I'm enjoying this. I'm enjoying this" as she took questions, for one last time, from the massed ranks of her enemies, on both sides of the House.

Professor George Steiner, a Central European émigré living in Cambridge, deems

that he calls John Major's "blessed decency" emblematically English: "That he could hand over power with a courteous handshake and smile, then go that afternoon to a cricket match, speaks well of the man. Robespierre would not have gone to a cricket match. In France, where they are passionate about abstract ideas, if you shoot a man for disagreeing with you about Hegel, then that is a tremendous compliment to the life of the mind. The English would say, 'No, no, that is very silly.'"

Hastings, when the widows of the shattered English were allowed to search the mounds of dead to give them a decent burial in Battle Abbey, to the rearward at Dunkirk, British history is resonant with acts of decency in disaster.

When, for instance, Sir Philip Sidney — scholar, poet, courtier, wit, preux chevalier of the Elizabethan Age — was mortally wounded on the battlefield of Zutphen in 1586, he handed his water bottle to a dying private soldier, saying: "Thy necessity is yet greater than mine." More recently, prisoners of war at the Bridge on the River Kwai famously marched in step to their death singing *Colonel Bogey*; and the Highland Brigade, surrounded by Panzers at St Valéry en Caux, in 1940 marched off into captivity with pipes playing and kills swaying to *Highland Laddie* and *The Black Bear*. Here was peculiar grace indeed.

The England football team are in good company.



Out, with honour: even Argentina praised England's spirit

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OBITUARIES

SIR MICHAEL MANN

Sir Michael Mann, PC, a former Lord Justice of Appeal, died in hospital of an infection on June 14 aged 67. He was born on December 9, 1930.

Michael Mann sat in judgment over some of the most publicised cases of the day during his 13 years as a judge, first in the High Court and then in the Court of Appeal. He was one of three judges who in 1991 quashed the convictions of the Maguire Seven, imprisoned 16 years before after being accused of operating an IRA bomb factory. In the following year he was widely quoted after the convictions of four City advisers in the Blue Arrow fraud trial, the second longest criminal trial in English legal history, were similarly reversed. The prosecution which had cost £40 million was, he said, "a costly disaster which must never be repeated".

It was Michael Mann who, in the same year, decided that Kevin Maxwell should be made to disclose what he knew of the money missing from the Mirror Group pension funds following the death of his father Robert Maxwell.

His cases in the High Court included the 1985 trial of three men charged with killing a taxi driver by dropping a concrete block on his cab while he was driving a miner to work during the pit strike. Their convictions were later reduced from murder to manslaughter on appeal because Mann himself this time was held to have misdirected the jury — although he was largely absolved from blame because the guidelines for judges had been faulty.

In 1989, some 12 months after he had been elevated to the Court of Appeal, Mann was one of three judges who upheld the legality of the 1988 Act prohibiting Spanish trawlers from being registered in this country — at least until it had been superseded by European law. On another occasion, he ruled against Lord Rees-Mogg who had tried to prevent the Government from ratifying the Maastricht treaty on the ground that it had exceeded its powers.

But by no means all his opinions were welcome in Whitehall. In the mid-1980s, while still sitting in the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court, he judged Sir



Michael Mann (pointing) with protesters in the Vale of Belvoir, subject of an application to mine coal by the NCB in 1979

Norman Fowler, then Secretary of State for Health and Social Security, to have exceeded his powers in trying to cut the unemployment pay of residents on the so-called "Costa del Dole" — those who were filling up seaside boarding houses and refusing to judge. His ruling affected about 70,000 claimants and a social security board and lodgings budget which had risen from £50 million in 1979 to £380 million five years later. But Mann said that such a decision was one for Parliament, not a mere minister.

Born in Streatham, South London, Michael Mann was the son of a civil engineer who had been chief engineer during the building of the nuclear power station at Dounreay. The family moved to Sanderstead when he was

young and he went to Whitgift School, where his academic progress was slow until he reached the sixth form.

He then went to King's College London to read law, only to miss his expected first by failing his Roman Law paper. Nonetheless, he was accepted as a postgraduate and wrote a thesis on international law for his PhD. Called to the Bar by Gray's Inn in 1953, he worked for a while as a part-time legal assistant in the Foreign Office and also lectured at the London School of Economics, continuing to do so until 1964.

But in 1955 he was also persuaded to start practising at the Bar, and did so for the next 27 years, specialising in planning law. He even interrupted his honeymoon in 1957 to handle Paddington Bor-

ough Council's planning application to install parking meters. Michael Mann was junior counsel to the Land Commission (Common Law) between 1967 and 1971 and took silk in the following year. He became a Crown Court recorder in 1979 and was made a High Court judge in 1982.

He won national publicity for the first time in 1979 when he was appointed inspector at a public inquiry into the National Coal Board's application to mine 510 million tons of coal in the Vale of Belvoir. The local opposition was led by the Duke of Rutland of Belvoir Castle, and more than twenty barristers including seven QCs, were involved in the bitterly contested hearing. Mann found for the NCB, which argued that its scheme would provide more than

4,000 jobs over the next 80 years — although, as events turned out, the Government called a halt to it anyway.

Mann became a bencher of Gray's Inn in 1980, master of the estate in 1993 and chairman of the management committee in 1994. He was president of the Administrative Law Bar Association in 1993. He also jointly edited four editions of Dicey's (now Dicey and Morris's) *Conflict of Laws* between 1957 and 1980. Appointed a Lord Justice of Appeal in 1988, he retired three years ago on grounds of ill-health.

Mann was known for the meticulous precision of his judgments and the relish with which he cut through all bureaucracy and red tape. Outside the Royal Courts of Justice he was a rather private

man with cerebral interests which were relieved by an appetite for P. G. Wodehouse. An amateur historian, he wrote more than one letter to *The Times* on the Battle of Britain which he had witnessed all too closely as a boy in suburban Surrey. He never learnt to drive because of poor eyesight. Far from gregarious, the only club he belonged to was the Athenaeum, but he gave even that up after a while because he found he rarely went there, preferring to get out of London at the end of the day and go home.

His marriage to his first wife Jean, whom he had known since school days, was dissolved in 1988 after more than 30 years and he is survived by his second wife Audrey, two sons by his first marriage and a stepdaughter.

JOHN ALLEN

John Allen, political speechwriter to Harold Wilson, died on June 23 aged 66. He was born on May 26, 1932.

JOHN ALLEN — along with Terry Pitt, his slightly younger contemporary who served as head of the Labour Party's Research Department — was one of the outstanding casualties of modern British politics. Both men had been close to Harold Wilson and seemed to have the gates of paradise opened to them when he came to power in October 1964. But the careers of neither prospered thereafter — partly, no doubt, owing to human frailty but also thanks to bad luck.

Of the two, Allen had the more colourful time at the centre of politics. Travelling with Wilson throughout the 1964 election campaign (from which Labour emerged with a majority of just four seats) he immediately moved with the new Prime Minister into No 10, once Wilson took over from Sir Alec Douglas-Home on October 16, 1964.

But Allen's period at the heart of government was to prove a short and chequered one. Conducting a brief fling with Harold Wilson's long-serving and very powerful political secretary, Marcia Williams (later Lady Falkender), he was accused of trifling with her affections — and, when he disclaimed any serious intentions, was in 1965 banished as an economic adviser to Botswana.

He had, however, his champions at court — and, partly through the lobbying of Wilson's chief economic adviser, Thomas Balogh, was eventually allowed back to London (though only to return to the Research Department in Transport House, and not to No 10). By 1970, however, Wilson's heart had softened and Allen was permitted to rejoin the election team, where he resumed his speechwriting duties.

No doubt, had that election been won, his whole position might have been rehabilitated. But, against most of the pollsters' predictions, Wilson lost to Edward Heath on June 18,

1970 — and ever afterwards felt uncomfortable in the company of those he associated with the defeat.

Allen's days in No 10 were at an end — and so also was his hoped-for political career, when before the February 1974 election he lost the Labour nomination for his father's old seat of Crewe to Gwyneth Dunwoody by just five votes in a hotly fought selection conference.

John Scholefield Allen was one of the two sons of Sydney Scholefield Allen, QC, Labour MP for Crewe, 1945-74. Brought up in Hampstead Garden Suburb, he won a scholarship to Christ's College, Cambridge, where he enjoyed the reputation of being one of the more brilliant undergraduates of his generation. He took a first in economics and greatly impressed the then University Reader in the subject, Nicky Kaldor — another friendship that was to do him no harm when the latter emerged as special adviser to the Chancellor, James Callaghan, in 1964.

Allen's later years were rather sad. There was no summons to return when Wilson formed his third Government in March 1974, and he settled down in his early forties to a premature retirement, mainly devoted to eating and drinking (his size became gargantuan). He made a point of going every autumn to the Labour Party conference, appearing more and more as a ghost from times past.

His old interests flickered back to life during the 1991 election in his home constituency of Monmouth, and he was further delighted when the Labour candidate won (though even here there was pain as well as pleasure, since it was a part of the world he had once aspired to represent himself).

John Allen had been married and was divorced. His former wife Philippa, who worked for many years for the BBC in Bush House and enjoyed a considerable fame at one stage as a BBC TV presenter, survives him. They had no children.



Allen: after a period at the heart of the Wilson Government he was banished as an adviser to Botswana in 1965

THE REV MICHAEL VASEY

The Rev Michael Vasey, lecturer in theology and liturgy at St John's College, Durham, died on June 28 aged 52 after a heart attack. He was born on January 23, 1946.

ALTHOUGH by no means the only clerical upholder of gay rights within the Church of England, Michael Vasey's support for the cause always had special significance. A totally unapologetic, conservative Evangelical — he had trained for the ministry at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, and held his only curacy in the traditionally Protestant parish of Tonbridge — King was

also a biblical scholar of some renown.

For the past 25 years he had held a tutorship at St John's College, Durham, and was a member of the current General Synod, having previously served on the Anglican Liturgical Commission. This made him a particularly formidable (and embarrassing) opponent for those in such Protestant organisations as Reform who have consistently based their objections to homosexuality on biblical texts. Outspoken traditionalists, such as David Holloway, a leader of Reform and the vicar of Jesmond, experienced far more difficulty in dealing with a pillar of their

own school of churchmanship than they did with those much more expected gay champions from the Anglo-Catholic or liberal wings of the Church of England.

Michael Richard Vasey had a conventional enough education, going to school at Shrewsbury and moving on from there to Balliol College, Oxford, where he graduated in 1968. The next two years he spent preparing for ordination at Wycliffe Hall before serving his title (his only parochial experience) at Tonbridge Parish Church.

He first arrived at Durham in 1973 and for many years there was nothing to single him out from most of his clerical, academic colleagues. In 1989, however, he was set upon and robbed by two youths who had met him in a gay bar. This appears to have had the effect of persuading him formally to "come out" and in February 1991 he published a pamphlet entitled *Evangelical Christians and Gay Rights*. With its defence of "cruising" and "cottaging" — and its assertion that Jesus himself would have felt completely at home in a gay bar — this pamphlet certainly succeeded in provoking a flutter in the Anglican dioceses. But, despite the predictable protests from those whom the caustic Bishop Hensley

Henson (also of Durham) once described as inhabiting "the Protestant underworld", the pamphlet in fact provoked a far more muted reaction than did his subsequent book *Strangers and Friends* (1995).

By 1995, of course, Vasey was an elected member of the General Synod and — since that body has from the late 1970s provided the cockpit for the controversy over homosexual clergy — this alone was probably enough to guarantee the work maximum publicity. (It was certainly no hindrance that in the 1995 General Synod elections clergy in favour of gay rights should have topped the poll in two separate dioceses.)

But it looked as if Vasey had managed to ride out the storm. Even some bishops have come to recognise that there must be an anomaly in a position whereby homosexual practices that are permitted for the laity are forbidden to the clergy. And, in his own case, the evident seriousness of Vasey's approach to the subject probably acted as some form of breastplate.

When Vasey was struck down, he was actively looking forward to attending the coming meeting of the General Synod to be held in York this weekend. He never married.



Vasey: biblical scholar who championed gay rights

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TRAGEDY AT SEA

Film Record of the Titanic. The sinking of the Titanic has been dramatised on several occasions, and the subject has been examined from different aspects — as one of the greatest disasters in marine history, as an essay in human courage, as an event that symbolised the passing of an age, and as a warning against man's complacency, and his belief in the indestructibility of human inventions.

ON THIS DAY

July 2, 1958. Made 40 years ago, this film about the sinking of the Titanic may have lacked some of the spectacular effects of the recent Hollywood epic, but the screenplay of Eric Ambler and the pacing of the build-up by the director Roy Baker made a strong impression.

serious list that the first signs of alarm, and the first stirrings of panic, began to take hold of those on board.

Carefully, almost too scrupulously, Mr Baker presents his audience with a cross-section of the ship and of the passengers on board her, moving his cameras from the bridge to the engine room, from the stateroom quarters to the first-class saloons, while at the same time building up the sense of bewilderment and incomprehension on board the other vessels in the Atlantic who are receiving by wireless the seemingly unbelievable news that the Titanic is sinking on her maiden voyage.

HUGE SONGS ON BOARDS, ET MUSIC, 300 WIND PHONE JNDON 74976 Bond Street, 003909 going to press

NEWS

Treasury grabs defence windfall

The Defence Secretary has been forced by the Treasury to hand over up to £1 billion in savings...

George Robertson has been told by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, that he has been blessed with a windfall of extra cash...

Beckham asks to be forgiven

David Beckham apologised publicly for jeopardising England's World Cup chances as he flew home with his team mates last night...

Economic gloom

The British public has become much gloomier about the outlook for the economy following a sharp deterioration in the past month...

Nike gets the boot

Nike revealed its first loss for 13 years, hit by teenagers' desire to drop their trainers for more sophisticated footwear...

Electric Assembly

Northern Ireland's Assembly began with electric exchanges as hardline Unionists and republicans came face to face...

Basic art

An artist who applies elephant dung to his canvases and cut-outs from pornographic magazines was shortlisted for the Turner Prize...

Women drive on

The inconvenience and perceived lack of security of buses, the Tube and trains are responsible for putting so many more women behind the wheel...

Musical re-write

Eighteen months after American critics slated Whistle Down the Wind at its premiere, prompting a major rewrite...

Teacher unveiled as Stripper Nick

A religious education teacher has been forced to resign after moonlighting as 'Nick, the Stripper'. Robert Fraser, 46, says he took his clothes off in pubs and clubs because he could not afford to pay his mortgage...

Lawrence case

The Crown Prosecution Service lawyer who discontinued the prosecution in the Stephen Lawrence murder case said he took the decision with his mind and not his heart...

Diana temple

The faithful had their first opportunity to worship at the temple of Diana. Unanimously, they pronounced it tasteful, restrained and moving...

Austria in the chair

Austria replaced Britain in the chair of the EU and made clear that it would fight for harmonising taxes and to slow the opening of frontiers...

Café politics

Chez Edgard, the Paris restaurant where politicians have gathered to hatch plots, has been forced to close because of what its owner claims are misguided economic policies...

Hostages killed

Nine Serb hostages held by the Kosovo Liberation Army are believed to have been murdered as Serb forces recaptured a crucial coalmine...

First strike claim

American officials said that the FBI had interviewed a defectoring Pakistani nuclear physicist who claims Islamabad asked its scientists to prepare for a first nuclear strike against India...



Forty-love: Lucy Heald, Tim Henman's girlfriend, his agent and his parents applaud his quarter final victory at Wimbledon. Pages 1, 56

BUSINESS

Thomson probes: The Securities and Futures Authority, the City regulator, has launched a formal investigation into the handling of the Thomson Travel Group £1.7 billion share flotation...

Ladbroke delay: The Monopolies and Mergers Commission has been given extra time to complete its report on Ladbroke's £363 million Coral takeover...

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 87.4 to 5919.9. The pound rose to 107.1 from 107.0 after falling .80 cents to \$1.6593 and rising .83 pence to DM3.0171...

SPORT

Football: Michael Owen is now a world name. In France they are calling him the petit Ronaldo, the phenomenon, the teenager who promises a brighter future for England...

Wimbledon: The women's singles semi-finals will be Nathalie Tauziat, 30, and Natasha Zvereva, 27; Jana Novotna, 29, and Hingis, 17 going on 40...

Cricket: Alec Stewart, the England captain, will seek no praise, and expect no sympathy, if his team come second to South Africa in the third Test at Old Trafford...

Rugby union: Paul Sampson, 20, the Wasps wing, will make his debut for England in the international against South Africa at Newlands on Saturday...

ARTS

Film 1: How can small-budget British film-makers compete with the might of the Hollywood marketing machine in the hype stakes... and do they need to?...

Film 2: The week's new movies reviewed, including Harrison Ford and Anne Heche washed up on a deserted island in the rent-a-pilot comedy, Six Days Seven Nights...

Art of war: The Imperial War Museum's series of shows devoted to official war artists highlights the contribution of Rodrigo Moynihan and Paula Vezalay...

Quiet star: Despite his high-profile role as partner to Sylvie Guillem, the Royal Ballet dancer Jonathan Cope prefers to keep out of the limelight...

FEATURES

Dr Thomas Stuttaford: TB; arthritis drugs; raspberry leaf tea and pregnancy; flour allergies; and skin cancer...

Underage drinkers: The inquest into the death of a 14-year-old girl who fell from a roof while drunk will fuel concern about alcohol abuse among the young...

Native Aude: Peter Ackroyd discusses the influences upon one of England's greatest poets...

Lebanon trial: Jeanette Winterson discovers that Radcliffe Hall can still unsettle society...

Bergains: Last-minute deals in Britain, Europe and further, from cruising on the Norfolk Broads to a tour of China...

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

POP

David Sinclair gives his verdict on Hello Nasty, the new album from the Beastie Boys

EDUCATION

Vivian Anthony asks whether universities will block the reform of A levels



Robert Fraser, 46, says he took his clothes off in pubs and clubs because he could not afford to pay his mortgage on his £28,000-a-year teacher's salary. The married father of three was earning an extra £1,000 a week when a former pupil saw him in his G-string. Page 3

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,833

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers and some filled-in letters.

- ACROSS
1 Fabric to make daughter a cloak (6).
4 On the inside of vessel smear processed cheese (8).
10 Old crawler used to get around the King (7).
11 Bore showing some strength of character (7).
12 I get pistol out, creating a flap (10).
13 It sounds as if quay makes this charge (4).
15 It's not better one finds in jug (7).
17 After drink it's right to have unruly youth warned (7).
19 Extremist moving out from the centre to trap Conservative (7).
21 Falling around river, like heavy rain (7).
23 Bear originally towards a large island (4).
24 Details of contract making little impression (5,5).

Worldleap! puzzle grid with letters and numbers.

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AA INFORMATION

AA information including road and weather conditions, motoring, and car reports by fax.

FORECAST

Weather forecast for various regions including Wales, N Ireland, London, and E Anglia.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Table showing weather conditions around Britain yesterday, including temperature, wind, and cloud cover for various locations.

ABROAD

Table showing weather conditions in various foreign locations such as Accra, Madrid, and Rome.

NOON TODAY

Map of the UK showing weather conditions at noon today, including high and low pressure systems and fronts.

HIGH TIDES

Table showing high tide times for various locations across the UK.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday's highest and lowest temperatures for various locations across the UK.

RADIO & TV

Preview: Fay Weldon charts a feminist publishing house. Big Women (Channel 4, 10pm). Review: Joe Joseph on toilet technology, Japanese-style... Pages 54, 55

OPINION

The only route

John Hume, the man with the greatest moral authority in Irish nationalism, should ask the residents of the Garvaghy Road to show that there is room for all traditions by allowing this march to proceed... Page 25

Heroic in defeat

England will win often again at football. If they play as well as they did against Argentina. Next time, let us hope without a penalty shoot-out... Page 25

L'addition

French politics will continue to mix the mendacious with the mouth-watering, the government with the gourmand... Page 25

COLUMNS

ANATOLE KALETSKY

England's defeat on Tuesday was not the fault of Beckham or Barry or Hoddle or any of the other players. It was the fault of an incompetent, stupid and vain referee... Page 24

MARY ANN SIEGHART

The best hope for better government is that ministers should at least try to grow up... Page 24

MAGNUS LINKLATER

England and Scotland went, saw, and came back beaten. But both drew comfort from the experience, and found possibilities for the future. It is, after all, only a game... Page 24

PETER RIDDELL

The Government is being given a chance to prove itself - and the benefit of the doubt for any slip-ups and rows... Page 12

OBITUARIES

Sir Michael Mann, Lord Justice of Appeal; John Allen, speechwriter; The Rev Michael Vasey, advocate of gay rights... Page 27

LETTERS

Lords reform: recycling waste; BBC and Government teacher inductions; Virgin trains; British Jewry; World Cup... Page 25

LOTTERY NUMBERS

17, 18, 28, 40, 44, 46. Bonus: 29. Estimated jackpot is £3,900,000.

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, featuring text like 'INSIDE SECTION 2 TODAY', 'SEA LAUNCH', 'inquiry', 'Thomson', and 'Ladbroke bi'.

INSIDE SECTION
2
TODAY



BUSINESS
Bronwen Maddox on Shanghai's risks and rewards
PAGE 33



ARTS
The only man on the island is Harrison Ford
PAGES 38-41



SPORT
History beckons as Henman moves into semi-finals
PAGES 46-56

TELEVISION AND RADIO
PAGES 54-55

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY JULY 2 1998

Handling of issue prompts complaints **SFA launches inquiry into Thomson float**

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY

THE Securities and Futures Authority, the City regulator, has taken the unprecedented step of launching a formal investigation into the handling of the Thomson Travel Group's £1.7 billion share floatation after thousands of complaints from private investors.

plaints from individuals who were frustrated in their attempts to apply for Thomson shares in May.

or registered and received an application too late.

The companies under scrutiny are Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, TTG's financial adviser; Warburg Dillon Read, the global co-ordinator to the offer; and the five appointed share shops which handled the one million initial registrations which resulted in 500,000 formal applications for shares.

Initially, the SFA looked at complaints on an *ad hoc* basis, but having completed the process last month, it announced yesterday it was launching a formal investigation into the matter.

Dresdner Kleinwort Benson said: "We do not want to prejudge the SFA's findings. Asked whether the investigation would affect the company's ability to pitch for new business of a similar nature, a spokesman said: "I do not see why it should."

The share shops are the Share Centre, Barclays Stockbrokers, NatWest Stockbrokers, Skipton Building Society's dealing service, and Hargreaves Lansdown stockbrokers.

TTG shares floated in May at an issue price of 170p and reached a high of 199p. Yesterday the shares slipped 1p to close at 184p.

The Share Centre has already admitted that it had a problem with a mailing house which meant there was a delay in some applicants receiving registration forms.

All these companies being investigated could be publicly fined, reprimanded, or even struck off the register if they are found to have breached the SFA's rules and principles.

TTG announced last month it was extending the shareholders' perks scheme.

TTG, which is not regulated by the SFA and is therefore not being investigated, said: "We welcome the SFA's decision to act as conciliator."

The investigation will look at whether the timetable for applications was adequate, whether too few share shops were appointed and how the share shops dealt with the backlog of applications.

If the SFA finds any of the companies involved have breached the rules, complainants may have recourse to the SFA's compensation scheme from which individuals can claim up to £50,000.

A spokeswoman said: "Where conciliation fails, the complainant may refer the matter to the Consumer Arbitration Scheme for consideration by an independent arbitrator with the power to make a binding award."

The SFA will also attempt to mediate in disputes between investors and the share shops in order to reach a fair settlement.

A spokeswoman for the SFA said: "Complainants are concerned either that they registered with a share shop and did not receive an application,



In fashion: shares in Gucci leapt higher on the New York and Amsterdam stock exchanges as speculation continued that Prada, whose collection is pictured above, intends to lift its 9.5 per cent stake. A denial by Patrizio Bertelli, president of Prada, that he is seeking to raise \$100 million to help to fund purchases of Gucci shares failed to quash speculation that he has Gucci in his sights

British Biotech director 'withheld bad news'

BY PAUL DURMAN

PETER LEWIS, the former research and development director of British Biotech, withheld bad news about the company's drug trials because he was keen to cash in his share options, MPs were told yesterday.

Andy Millar, dismissed in April as British Biotech's director of clinical research, told the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee that Dr Lewis had behaved "treacherously" in failing to pass on his misgivings about the company's business plan that were based on the disappointing drug trial results.

He said Keith McCullagh, British Biotech's chief executive, had agreed with this assessment, and in May last year said he would sack Dr Lewis. Dr Millar said Dr Lewis did not return to his office on a routine daily basis.

Dr Millar said: "During the first four months [of 1997], the business plans were very optimistic but I was giving Dr Lewis some very pessimistic information." Asked to suggest a motive for Dr Lewis's actions, he said: "I feel that Dr Lewis had been acting so that he could keep the share price up so that he could cash his share options."

Dr Lewis is understood to have made about £1.5 million from his share options last year. British Biotech's share price has since collapsed from over 200p to a low of 30p.

MPs heard that British Biotech stuck to the optimistic business plan that required it to spend £60 million a year. This eventually led to Dr Millar's dismissal.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5919.9	(+87.4)
Yield	2.75%	
FTSE All share	2777.21	(+33.75)
Nickel	16382.89	(+532.62)
New York		
Dow Jones	8013.85	(+61.53)
S&P Composite	1140.41	(+6.57)

US RATE

Federal Funds	6 1/8%	(6.63%)
Long Bond	10 7/8%	(10.88%)
Yield	5.62%	(5.63%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	7 3/4%	(7.75%)
Life long BR		
future (Sep)	108.75	(108.88)

STERLING

New York	1.6610*	(1.6677)
London		
DM	3.0175	(3.0116)
FF	10.1100	(10.0880)
Sfr	2.5381	(2.5303)
Yen	238.21	(231.55)
£ Index	107.1	(107.0)

YEN

London		
DM	1.8172*	(1.8075)
FF	6.2015*	(6.0525)
Sfr	1.5282*	(1.5203)
Yen	138.76*	(138.57)
£ Index	112.5	(112.2)

Volvo close Yen 138.24

Brent 15-day (Sep)	\$13.90	(\$13.90)
London close	\$295.45	(\$296.85)
* denotes midday trading price		

Volvo talks

Volkswagen and Volvo could be the next two major car manufacturers to join forces after holding talks that could lead to a merger in direct response to the £55 billion union of Daimler-Benz and Chrysler.

Not so slick

Oil refiners in Europe face a £30 billion investment bill to meet stiff new EU emission standards agreed in Brussels for diesel and petrol.

Regulator gives leaks warning

BY RICHARD MILES

CITY regulators are clamping down on investment banks that privately divulge sensitive information to third parties during an acquisition or merger deal.

trying to tighten the rules." Last month, the Financial Services Authority, the super-regulator that will officially take over the SFA's responsibilities from 2000, unveiled a series of proposals to crack down on market abuses, principally the dissemination of sensitive information.

Corporate finance departments are believed to have been warned by the Securities and Futures Authority about passing on information that would be price-sensitive or even misleading if released into the public domain.

City analysts fear that their private talks with companies, typically in the run-up to a trading statement, might also be banned as regulators try to limit the amount of information that is not first disclosed to the market.

While a bank's clients can always take legal action if they believe they have suffered a loss by being misled during negotiations with corporate advisers, the SFA is keen to take preventive action.

Corporate financiers have been sued for passing on misleading information during deals, most notably Samuel Montagu - now part of HSBC's investment banking arm - which had to pay out an estimated £140 million over a failed deal in 1987.

Doubt over benefits project

BY RICHARD MILES

DELAYS to a £1 billion Post Office project to automate the payment of benefits has cast doubt over the next phase of its development.

A government review is considering whether the Post Office should roll out the Pathway system designed by ICL, the computer group, across its 19,000 outlets, given that the project is almost two years behind schedule. The review, by the Department of Social Security, DTI and Treasury, is expected to produce its report on Pathway in the next few months.

Patricia Hewitt, a member of the Social Security Select Committee, said she had asked the Government to clarify its plans for Pathway, but had been told much of the data was commercially confidential.

Yen continues to strengthen

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE Japanese yen strengthened yesterday amid growing market optimism that Tokyo will finally take action to boost its flagging economy by cutting taxes and reforming its ailing banks.

However, it slipped slightly to 138.6 to the dollar in European trade although it remained confidently above its recent low of 146.75.

The yen's revival supported other troubled markets in the region and also lifted London and New York. The FTSE 100 rose 87.4 at 5919.9 while the Dow Jones was trading up 55 points.

Tokyo's Nikkei index rose 3.4 per cent to 16,362.89. South Korea was up 7 per cent and markets in Singapore and Malaysia also registered gains of around 3 per cent. Indonesia climbed higher for the fourth consecutive day as a plan to reschedule the country's massive corporate debt finally came into effect.

By contrast, the South African rand came under attack. At one stage it fell to a record low of 6.20 to the US dollar before rumours that the Central Bank governor had been sacked were quashed.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index gained 1 per cent on the first anniversary of the hand-over from Britain.

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Ladbroke bid puts MMC in extra time

BY DOMINIC WALSH



EXTRA TIME has been given to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC) to complete its report on Ladbroke's £363 million Coral takeover, amid speculation that it will recommend the group be forced to sell off half the betting shops it has bought.

The MMC was originally due to submit its report to the Government next Tuesday, but Nigel Griffiths, the Competition and Consumer Affairs Minister, announced yesterday that he had agreed to a request for an extension until the end of the month.

He said there were "special reasons" why the MMC could not meet the original deadline, in particular "the unusually large number of submissions", both by third parties and by Ladbroke itself.

But industry sources believe the real reason for the MMC's request for more time is to allow it to come up with a formula for preserving a strong third big player in the betting shop market behind Ladbroke and William Hill without blocking the deal altogether.

Jones: Tote may buy shops

Industry jobless numbers rising

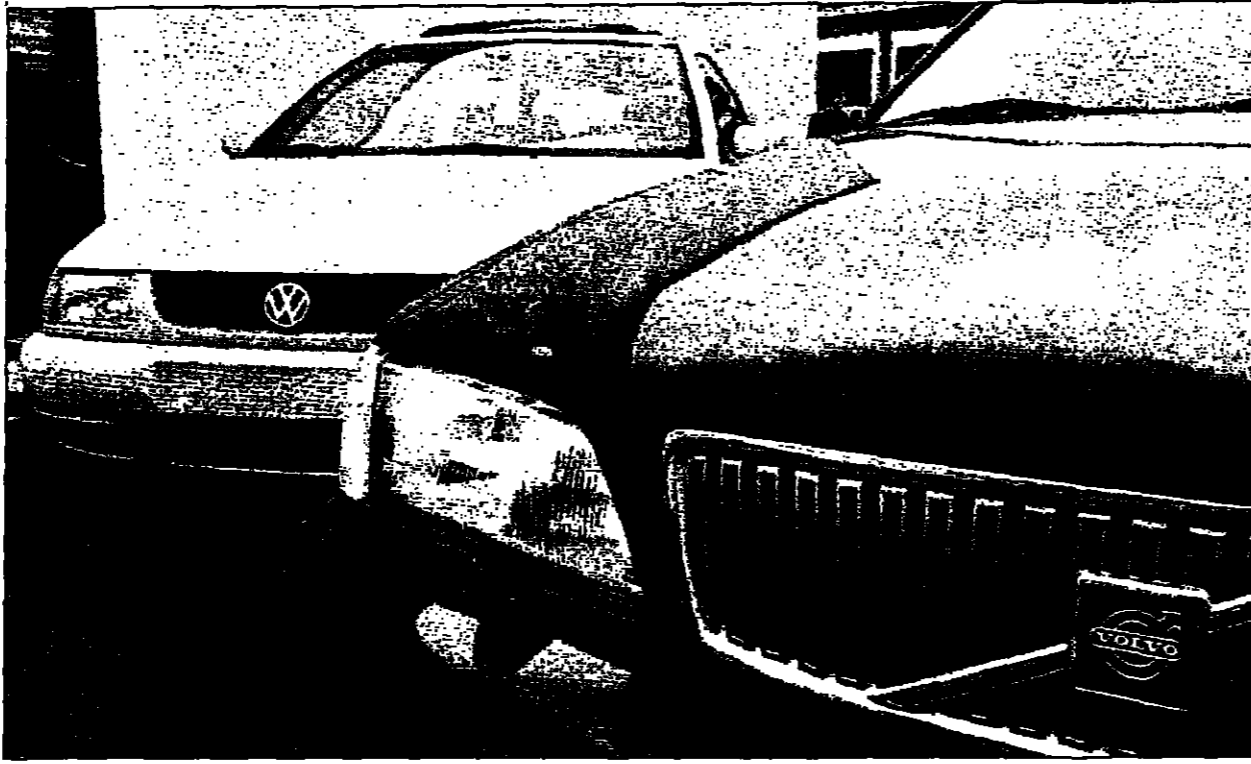
By ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

MANUFACTURING employment is falling at its fastest rate since the height of the last recession, a new survey published yesterday shows.

The June purchasing managers' survey confirmed that the sector remains mired in a technical recession with the activity index falling for the third consecutive month.

A separate business sentiment survey by the Institute of Directors (IoD) also showed that there has been a dramatic collapse in business optimism.

Overall order levels also slumped to their lowest levels since November 1995. The Chartered Institute of Purchasing Surveyors, which produces the survey, said manufacturers were suffering from the strong pound eroding exports and affecting domestic sales.



Bumper to bumper: carmakers are under increased pressure in the wake of the union of Daimler-Benz and Chrysler

VW and Volvo in talks over possible merger

By ADAM JONES

VOLKSWAGEN and Volvo could be the next two giants of the car industry to join forces after holding talks that could lead to a merger.

Ferdinand Piech, chairman of Volkswagen, met Leif Johansson, president and chief executive of Volvo, in Gothenburg, Sweden, last Friday.

Neither company would say what was discussed, but a source close to them said: "There is some form of collaboration going on that may or may not lead to a merger."

ever, it is possible that any collaboration between Volvo and VW could be limited to specific projects.

Volvo had sales of £14 billion last year, with net profits of £779 million. VW had sales of £37.5 billion and net profits of £451 million.

VW refused to comment on the talks but Volvo confirmed that Mr Johansson and Mr

Piech met last Friday. VW is keen to enter the heavy truck market, where Volvo is a major player.

Steve Young, an automotive consultant at AT Kearney, the management consultant, said a Volvo/VW link in trucks would make sense.

He added: "There is a fairly direct conflict between Audi and Volvo in passenger cars."

VW's purchase of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is due to be completed on Friday, Michael Shrimpton, a barrister leading a group of owners, has vowed to continue attempts to come up with a counter-bid, although any progress is unlikely to disturb the conclusion of the sale to VW.

Commentary, page 31

Halifax confirms housing slowdown

By SUSAN EMMETT

FEARS that the housing market is slowing down were confirmed yesterday by the Halifax.

The largest mortgage lender said that, as the economy weakens and interest rates go up, fewer people are buying houses. The number of property transactions fell to 108,000 in May, a drop of more than 10 per cent on last year.

According to the Halifax's house price index, property prices in the UK rose by 1 per cent in June compared with 0.3 per cent in May. The annual rise to June was 5.6 per cent from 5 per cent on the previous month.

However, the Halifax said the 1 per cent increase was higher than expected and that the general trend pointed towards a weaker and more cautious market, which could be affected seriously by another rate rise.

There have been four increases in base rates in 12 months, prompting most big lenders to raise their mortgage rates from 7.95 per cent to 8.95 per cent. The rises have added between £600 and £700 annually to the average mortgage bill.

However, the Halifax said it expected prices to continue rising modestly, as properties remain cheap relative to average earnings, and forecasts that house price inflation will remain at 5 per cent this year, slowing to 4 per cent in 1999.

Akers steps down at Leeds Sporting

CHRIS AKERS yesterday stepped down as chairman of Leeds Sporting, the company which owns Leeds United Football Club, though he is to continue as chief executive. Peter Ridsdale, who took over from Bill Fotherby as chairman of the Premiership football club last year and became a non-executive director of Leeds Sporting in April, has become chairman of the parent company. The move follows pressure from Leeds Sporting shareholders due to the poor performance of the group's share price — which has fallen by two thirds in a little more than a year. Though the football team performed well last season and has qualified for the Uefa cup, other developments, such as the building of an indoor arena next door to Leeds United's ground at Elland Road, have been progressing slowly.

It is understood the appointment of Mr Ridsdale, whose background is in retailing, will allow Mr Akers to concentrate on developing Leeds Sporting's media interests. Mr Akers led the controversial £18 million takeover of Leeds United two years ago by the company — then called Caspian. The offer went through despite two higher bids for the club being tabled by rival groups, Robin Launders, whom Mr Akers hired to run Leeds United, left the group last year after Mr Akers said the board had lost confidence in him.

US bank in \$7bn buy

STAR BANC has agreed to buy Firststar for \$7.2 billion (£4.3 billion) in a share swap, paying a 44 per cent premium. The acquisition will give the combined retail bank a strong presence in the American Midwest. American banks have been consolidating to cut costs and expand into new markets. The deal creates a company with \$38 billion in assets and 720 branches in ten states. Star Banc and Firststar estimate that they will reduce their expenses by \$174 million, with half of this saving in 1999 and the remainder in 2000.

Lewis back in business

DEREK LEWIS, the IT consultant who was at the centre of a £3 million pay package disagreement at United Utilities, is back in business. He has set up DataGroup, an IT services company, with the backing of Schroder Ventures after abruptly leaving Vertex Data Services, which runs United's billing operations, and aims to buy IT businesses worth £150 million over the next three years. He said: "Each year we anticipate buying businesses to the value of £50-£100 million, though we will also look at much larger individual deals."

Anglian sheds US arm

ANGLIAN WATER has concluded the disposal of its products divisions with the \$39.2 million (£23.6 million) sale of its US fluid systems membrane operation. The company, through its subsidiary Anglian Water International, has sold three other products businesses over the past year. Its American membrane business was sold to Koch Industries of the US. Chris Mellor, Anglian managing director, said the international division would now concentrate on building, operating and developing process engineering.

Logica buys in Belgium

LOGICA, the fast-growing information technology company, doubled the size of its Belgian operations yesterday with the purchase of Administra-CIM/Hardi for £9.1 million, funded by bank borrowings. Administra's focus is on multinational industrial clients. Logica said. For the year ended March 31, Administra earned revenues of BFR649 million (£10.3 million), with pre-tax profits of BFR45 million. The company employs 100 full-time staff. Shares in Logica fell 32½p to £19.05, compared with a recent high of £20.62½.

Profit turns Kingston into a smart operator

By CHRIS AYRES

KINGSTON COMMUNICATIONS, the Hull telecoms consultant, is considering a stock market flotation, yesterday announced profits of £11.6 million, compared with a loss the previous year of £500,000 after £5.5 million restructuring costs.

The company, which charges Hull residents only 5p for all local calls, said sales had risen 18 per cent to £128 million. It also plans in the near future to launch the first UK commercial ADSL service

— which makes Internet connections up to 50 times faster than at present.

Kingston, owned by Hull City Council, said Torch Telecom, which it recently bought from Yorkshire Electricity, had moved into profit in the final quarter. Steve Maine, chief executive, said: "Our Hull area business has again performed well and we have made the first step towards rolling out the successful Torch model of providing broadband business services."

Eagle Star to shed 540 staff in restructuring

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

BAT INDUSTRIES is to cut 540 jobs at its Eagle Star subsidiary, part of BAT's financial services division that is to merge with Zurich, the giant Swiss insurer.

The jobs are to go as part of a restructuring of Eagle Star's commercial insurance business that will involve a number of branch closures.

It comes as British American Financial Services, BAT's insurance arm, prepares to merge with Zurich in the late autumn, leaving BAT to concentrate on its cigarette-making businesses.

Eagle Star Commercial is cutting back its branch network, closing its Southampton and Leicester main branches by early 1999 and is also closing its commercial underwriting branches at Northampton, Norwich, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Newcastle, Sheffield, Liverpool, Chelmsford, Maidstone, Watford and Reading.

The cutbacks will account for about a third of the 1,600 job losses announced in May.

Troubled Ronson to lose chief

By JASON NISSE

WHEN Victor Kiam decided he liked Ronson lighters so much, he would rescue the company, he did not know how much trouble he was taking on. Last night, with Ronson shares suspended and the company unable to produce its report and accounts to schedule, Ronson looked set to lose its second chief executive in a little over a year.

Mr Kiam, known for his Remington shavers, bought into Ronson as part of a £6 million fundraising, with shares issued at just 1p each — compared with a peak of over 65p three years ago. The shares briefly rallied to 13p before falling back to 4½p, where they were suspended on Tuesday. The group is expected to show a loss of more than £11 million for the year.

The company's problems hark back to the reign of Howard Hodgson, the flamboyant former funeral director, who took over what was

than a small pubs company — Hoskings Brewery — and moved it into lighters.

Mr Hodgson's controversial way of running Ronson included having an affair with Christine Pickles, his corporate development director, and hiring his son, Howard junior, as a model for the new Ronson leisurewear range.

Both Mr Hodgson senior and Ms Pickles were ousted from the company last year in the wake of a management coup. They are now suing the group for more than £500,000 in compensation for loss of office and Mr Hodgson has found a job working for Colibri, Ronson's arch competitor.



Kiam: liked the company

Devro blames poor first half on currency costs

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

DEVRO, the sausage-skin manufacturer based in Scotland, suffered a 27 per cent fall in its share price yesterday after it issued a profits warning.

The shares fell to 136p to 367½p following an announcement that a slowdown in UK demand and reduced earnings from exports due to the strength of sterling would mean that pre-tax profits in the first half will be about £2 million below last year's level.

Analysis swiftly downgraded their forecasts, with Sally Jones of Credit Lyonnais Securities

moving from £65 million pre-tax profit for the current year to £55.5 million.

Graeme Alexander, chief executive, said there was no single reason for the reduction in UK sausage demand this spring. One factor was that poor weather had meant fewer barbecues, but he said the dip had taken everyone by surprise.

The company plans to close some of its production lines in Scotland for some weeks in response to the fall in demand. But Mr Alexander said the company's main problem lay

with the currency markets. Currency translation will account for £1.5 million of the first-half profit drop. "The fundamentals are rock solid," Mr Alexander said.

However, analysts said that some institutional investors are unhappy that last month's trading statement at the annual meeting did not make it clear how bad trade had become, and said this adverse sentiment partly accounted for the dramatic fall in share price.

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TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.77	2.59
Austria Sch	22.19	20.83
Belgium Fr	65.33	60.37
Canada \$	2.553	2.365
Cyprus Cyp£	0.924	0.853
Denmark Kr	12.06	11.17
Egypt Pound	5.85	5.24
Finland Mk	9.71	8.96
France Fr	10.57	9.79
Germany Dm	3.18	2.98
Greece Dr	533	494
Hong Kong \$	13.57	12.47
Iceland	131	111
Ireland Pt	1.25	1.16
Israel Sh	6.45	5.79
Italy Lira	3144	2907
Japan Yen	844.16	255.83
Malta	0.587	0.688
Netherlands Gld	3.586	3.231
New Zealand \$	3.23	3.09
Norway Kr	13.49	12.49
Portugal Esc	320.81	298.78
S Africa R	10.59	9.64
Spain Pta	267.26	248.47
Sweden Kr	14.15	13.05
Switzerland Fr	2.66	2.47
Turkey Lira	444.977	425.119
USA \$	1.765	1.622

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Too many Cooks spoil the deal

The odds are lengthening on Ladbroke winning a favourable monopolies commission ruling for its takeover of the Coral chain. Yesterday's news that the commission has asked to be given until the end of the month to complete its report does not augur well for the deal.

It seems that the commission has been bombarded with submissions from interested parties and the likelihood is that they will have been heavily weighted against Ladbroke. The Foreign Secretary set the tone. When he might have been expected to be deeply involved in affairs of state, Robin Cook was opining that his colleagues at the Department of Trade and Industry should ensure that the deal be subjected to "very clear and close scrutiny".

The President of the Board of Trade may feel tempted to suggest that the involvement of Sandline in international affairs might more properly be occupying the attention of the Foreign Secretary rather than the ownership of British betting shops. But instead, Margaret Beckett seems likely to deliver a verdict that will please Mr Cook, a keen racegoer and columnist on the sport of kings.

While it is unthinkable that the Chancellor would wager his pennies on the horses, it seems that Gordon Brown might also be grateful to his erstwhile ally if she insists, as is being rumoured, that Ladbroke sacrifice half the Coral chain. Who better to buy the shops than the Tote, which has already

done its bit to help ease through Ladbroke's purchase by agreeing to take on the shops that would have clear overlaps with the Ladbroke portfolio?

As Mr Brown parcels up the Tote for his autumn sale, bumping up the business would make sound commercial sense. And Ladbroke would hardly be in a position to be difficult over the price. So certain were the chief executive, Peter George, and his team that they had read the competition rules correctly and would be allowed to digest virtually all of the Coral chain that they did the deal unconditionally. Canny Bass has collected its £375.5 million and Coral is now Ladbroke's potential problem.

The irony is that the company and its advisers felt that they understood the grounds on which mergers among betting shops would be judged. Now, it seems they did not, or they failed to appreciate the commission's ability to change the rules. Mrs Beckett said in a recent speech on competition policy that her aim was to make it clear and open. When she eventually pronounces on this deal she will have the perfect opportunity to do just that.

Meanwhile, Peter George is considering a deal that makes the

Coral acquisition look puny. Stephen Bollenbach's decision to split Hilton Hotels Corporation into separate hotels and casino businesses is the necessary prerequisite for the long-awaited move to reunite Ladbroke's Hiltons with the US hotels of the same name. The 240 US hotels may be worth almost £5 billion. For Ladbroke's sake, one must hope that the Foreign Secretary does not feel strongly about the ownership of the hotels he uses.

Sinking feeling over Thomson float

Y ou've seen the headlines. Now read the small print," proclaimed yesterday's advertisements for the birth of a new investment bank. The small print detailed a selection of recent deals from what used to be known as SBC Warburg Dillon Read but which now, thanks to the combined

COMMENTARY by our City Editor

imaginative powers of its Swiss owners, is renamed as... Warburg Dillon Read. Makes all the difference, doesn't it?

Anyhow, near the bottom of the list of achievements, sandwiched between Textron Inc's bid for Ransomes and a \$4 billion issue for the World Bank is Thomson Travel. The small print boasts that Warburg Dillon Read was the global coordinator for the £1.36 billion Thomson float, "the largest ever corporate IPO in the UK". And yes, the very same issue which yesterday became the subject of a formal inquiry by the Securities and Futures Authority because of extraordinary bungling that led to a stream of complaints from would-be investors.

The global co-ordinator, so keen to take credit for the deal in its advertising, may be less keen to take the responsibility for the errors that beset the issue. Apart from Warburg's involvement, the SFA will be looking at the

role of Dresdner Kleinwort Benson. Thomson's financial adviser, and the five appointed share shops which were overwhelmed with one million individual registrations. It will examine whether the timetable set for the float was unreasonable — those who drew it up seemed oblivious, for instance, to the effect a bank holiday might have. It will also query whether the number of shareshops involved was sufficient to cope with the high level of demand for shares. Given that this was a well-known consumer company, making a very strong pitch to private shareholders and luring them with holiday discounts, it was destined to excite the punters.

If the SFA finds fault, it has the powers to reprimand publicly or fine the culprits or even strike them off. While the last, drastic, action seems highly unlikely in this case, the first could be upsetting enough, particularly

for an organisation that has just gone to the trouble of changing its name.

But this is a high profile case for the SFA to undertake and it comes as there is a growing view in the City that Howard Davies is determined that the regulators under his FSA umbrella should not only be tough but be seen to be tough.

Is it life in the slow lane for Piech?

Ferdinand Piech, the chairman of Volkswagen, has spent the past few months chasing every last car in sight: Bentley, Lamborghini, Bugatti. Is it now time for this scion of the Porsche family to settle down with a nice, safe, reliable Volvo?

Yesterday's admission by Volvo that Herr Piech and Leif Johansson, his opposite number at the Swedish group, had talked had both companies' shares buzzing.

After the Daimler-Chrysler merger, the car industry has been waiting for the next big deal. Volvo has been in play before. A planned merger with Renault collapsed in 1993. Some Volvo shareholders had —

understandably — lost their bottle when faced with the prospect of the French Government holding a "golden share".

VW was named as a potential suitor in the German media last November. It wants to expand in commercial vehicles. Scania, the Swedish truck maker, had been a target, but Volvo is also a big player and a deal would make sense on this basis.

This could be the most VW envisages. The overlap between Audi and Volvo may well be too great for a merger of the two passenger car divisions to make sense. Push aggressively for sales at one and you might harm the other. Redundancies and plant closures would be very expensive in either country.

The industry may have to wait for a US-Japanese merger — Ford and Nissan, say — for a real indication of who will dominate in the new global market.

Power Lynch

MERRILL LYNCH opened its first branch in Japan yesterday and was greeted with the welcoming response of a significant upward leap in the Nikkei index. The "Thundering Herd" is shrugging off concerns over the region's economic woes and looking to all the Japanese savings that are now likely to be seeking safety abroad. Twenty-seven more Merrill offices will be opening within the month, ready to collect the cash.

Dixons pays £19.5m for showrooms

DIXONS is to close or sell more than 20 Seaboard stores after its £19.5 million takeover of the electrical goods chain (Sarah Cunningham writes).

The company said it hopes to retain most of Seaboard's 550 staff.

Dixons is paying £18 million for the business plus stock valued at £1.5 million. The chain has 19 superstores, 20 high street stores and a 17-acre warehouse and office site in Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Seaboard, which is now owned by Central and South West Corporation of the US, has been keen to sell its retail operations to concentrate on its power business. It has been winding down its investment in the shops for several months while seeking buyers.

UK oil producers hit by new emission standards

STIFF new emission standards for diesel and petrol threaten Britain's oil companies with huge bills at a time when refineries are suffering from poor margins and a Europe-wide fuel glut.

Europe's oil refiners could face a total investment bill of up to £30 billion to meet new targets approved in Brussels this week.

According to Wood Mackenzie, the oil industry consultant, the costs will be substantial to meet new sulphur targets with hydro-treatment units costing about \$75 million (£44 million) apiece.

In Britain BP/Mobil's refinery at Coryton in Wales and the Lindsey refinery owned by Petrofina and Total are believed to face the biggest job in meeting the EU's sulphur



Wood Mackenzie reckons that the green lobby has secured the upper hand and the regulatory outlook could get worse for refiners.

emission target. This requires refiners to cut sulphur in diesel and petrol from 500 parts per million to 50 ppm by 2005. Shell's Stanlow refinery in Cheshire will require more investment. According to Wood Mackenzie, the facility is less well-equipped for low sulphur than the Shell Haven refinery which faces closure.

The investment will further damage the profitability of refineries which are struggling with margins of \$2 per barrel and an average return on capital of just 4 per cent. Sat Roopra of Wood Mackenzie said: "This kind of investment is just a cost which is difficult to recoup."

Oil companies are reluctant to shut down unprofitable refineries because of the huge environmental clean-up costs.

Benfield buys £25m stake in underwriter

BENFIELD & REA Investment Trust (Brit), the Lloyd's of London investment vehicle, has paid £25 million for a near-30 per cent share in Benfield Re, an underwriter at the insurance market. It has an option to acquire the remainder.

BRIT's strategy is to transform itself from an investment vehicle to an insurance trading company operating at Lloyd's.

BRIT published results for the year to March 31. Its value rose 22 per cent to 147.4p a share. The firm's final dividend of 3.5p, lifts the total to 6.5p from 4p.

John Coldman, the BRIT chairman who replaced Matthew Harding, the late financier of Chelsea Football Club, also told shareholders of his support for change at Lloyd's.

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Marston results 'below potential'

A YEAR of boardroom upheaval and reorganisation at Marston, Thompson & Evershed, the regional brewer and pub group, restricted full-year pretax profits to £30.6 million, a rise of just 3.7 per cent.

Nick Letchet, who became chief executive in February, claimed this was "reasonable progress" in the light of the changes, but said the results "do not reflect Marston's full potential".

Mr Letchet, whose appointment precipitated the departure of David Gordon, the managing director, said a priority would be to review returns from its 631-strong tenanted estate. This would involve "taking whatever action is necessary" — a clear hint that the business, which has a net asset value of £127.5 million, could be sold.

In the managed estate, the group will focus on developing its Pitcher & Piano and Via Vita brands and reversing a decline in some of its traditional pubs. It plans to open 12 Pitcher & Pianos and two Via Vitas this year at a total cost of about £9 million.

The two brands helped to lift operating profits from managed houses by 13.7 per cent to £25.7 million, while tenancies were up 7.8 per cent to £20.7 million. Brewing and wholesaling, boosted by wider distribution of Pedigree bitter, pushed profits 60 per cent higher to £6.5 million.

The company, which is based in Burton on Trent, is paying a final dividend of 5.9p, making 8.9p (8.03p). Earnings, per share, because of a rise in the tax rate, declined to 24.36p (28.86p).

Tempus, page 32

AN EXCLUSIVE WORLD CUP GAME THE TIMES

PLAY TEAM CHECK TO WIN CASH PRIZES WORTH £50,000

PLUS £15,000 AND THREE VAUXHALL CARS TO BE WON THIS WEEK

ITV Prize winners: Week 3 David Janovskis, Manchester, wins a Corsa Breeze and £1,000. Simon Gomersall, Canterbury, wins a pair of tickets to both World Cup Semi-final matches and £1,000. Kevin Manning, Southampton. Clare Curran, Leatherhead and Jack Chew, Ashford, Kent, each win £1,000. William Bradbeer, London SE21, wins a Corsa Breeze, £5,000 plus a pair of tickets to the World Cup Final.

Play *The Times* Week 4 game today for the chance to win up to £5,000 and a Vauxhall Astra when you reveal three matching symbols. There is also a further £10,000 in cash, a Tigra Chequers and a Corsa Breeze to be won by playing the Week 4 ITV/Vauxhall Team Check game this week.

HOW TO PLAY THE TIMES GAME WITH VAUXHALL

TUNE IN TO ITV TOMORROW

Tune in to ITV's World Cup quarter-finals coverage on Friday of ITALY v FRANCE which will be broadcast live at 8.30pm and BRAZIL v DENMARK at 8pm, for your Team Check numbers for the ITV/Vauxhall Week 4 game on your card. At the beginning and the end of the commercial breaks in these programmes you will see Vauxhall sponsorship clips. DURING EACH CLIP A WHITE TEAM CHECK NUMBER WILL BE HIGHLIGHTED IN THE TOP LEFT-HAND CORNER OF THE SCREEN. If any of the highlighted numbers match a number on the silver football shirts on the Week 4 ITV/Vauxhall game on your card, scratch them off. DO NOT scratch off any numbers that do not appear on your gamecard will be void. You will reveal a symbol. If you reveal three identical symbols you have won a share of this week's ITV/Vauxhall £10,000 Team Check prize and must call the claims line between 9.30am and 3pm on Saturday.

NUMBERS FOR THE ITV/VAUXHALL WEEK 4 GAME WILL BE BROADCAST ON FRIDAY

START PLAYING THE WEEK 4 GAME NOW

The fourth set of names for *The Times* Week 4 Team Check game on your card appear below. If any of the names match those on your Week 4 Times game panel scratch them off. DO NOT scratch off any names that do not appear on your gamecard will be void. You will reveal a symbol: a football, a whistle, a boot, a cup, a linesman's flag or a footballer. If you have revealed three matching symbols today you have won a share of this Week's Times/Sunday Times £5,000 prize and must make a claim on the Team Check hotline 0191-501 1240 before 3pm today.

MATTHAUS 12
GASCOIGNE 19
GEMMIL 6

MORE PLAYERS' NAMES FOR THE TIMES WEEK 4 GAME WILL BE PRINTED TOMORROW

YOU CAN ALSO PLAY TEAM CHECK IN THE SUNDAY TIMES

VAUXHALL CARS WORTH £100,000 TO BE WON

Prizes: Astra Chequers, Tigra Chequers, Corsa Breeze, Astra Club, Corsa Breeze

Prize draw: An official sponsor of the World Cup and partner of ITV's coverage of the tournament, has 10 Vauxhall cars worth £100,000 to be won. The prizes will be drawn on Friday, 3 July, at 8pm. The draw will be held at the Vauxhall plant in Luton. The prizes will be awarded to the lucky winners. For more information on the prizes and how to play, visit our website at www.vauxhall.co.uk

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ACCOUNTANCY

Colossus takes first steps to make its mark in a new world

The brass plates of Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand have vanished overnight and banners celebrating the birth of the unmanageably named PricewaterhouseCoopers have emerged. Yesterday marked the formal launch of the largest professional services firm the world has ever seen.

The accountancy profession has changed irrevocably. The step up in size and influence will alter the big firms' mindset for good.

By any measure the change is vast. The new firm has current annual fee income of \$15 billion (£9 billion). It has 9,000 partners worldwide and 867 offices. Even in the UK it will have 15,000 staff and 1,000 partners. The days when a senior partner knew the name and background of a junior partner in Aberdeen have vanished.

Now comes the mammoth task of making something of the colossus. Senior partners at Arthur Andersen have taken to making the disparaging comment that "when you put two crows together you don't get an eagle". But size alone has transformed the market. PwC's nearest competitors — Ernst & Young and KPMG, both with around \$9 billion fees each, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu with \$7.5 billion and the remains of Arthur Andersen, assuming its inevitable split from its consulting arm, with \$5.2 billion — are significantly behind.

Colin Sharman, KPMG worldwide chairman, said: "In the past the competitive balance was fairly even... that is going to change." And that is why Mr Sharman and his new global executive team are closeted in a hotel near Bath this week planning their future strategy.

Nick Moore, PwC's worldwide chairman, promises leadership not just of the firm but of the profession. "We are in front of the pack rather than

Robert Bruce on the implications of yesterday's tie-up between Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand

followers," he said. Jim Schiro, the new worldwide chief executive, said: "We need to go back to our roots and be much more ready to speak out for the profession."

There is a long way to go. Before the new firm can reap the benefits it hopes to create, it has to sort itself out. Ian Brindle, UK chairman and global risk management leader, said: "The problems are to come. The issue will be putting everything together and making sure that clients are served."

Clients have been wary. Brian Birkenhead, deputy chairman of the 100 Group of Finance Directors, said the majority of his members were still against the merger. "We will live with it," he said. "But levels of service will go down as they have in all such mergers as we have seen with the banks and the financial services companies."

Finance directors see the choice being reduced. There are now only five large firms to choose from. And at the highest corporate level this can be impossible, particularly on transactions where separate audit firms are needed for purchaser, vendor, due diligence and long form reports as well as other services. Mr Birkenhead said: "Finance directors will be watching and will be very hard-nosed over fees and service specifications."

Mr Brindle refutes this. He feels that the market will become more competitive. "The merger has changed the face of the profession and the

major firms forever," he said. "The firms will be even more competitive than they were before. There will be a real fight for market share."

Mr Sharman is not so sure. "The Big Five will be more distinguishable," he said. "PwC will go for everything. We will focus on things that we can be number one in."

What has transformed the market is the technology which enables companies to compete globally. The professional services firms are following suit. "We have moved well away from the traditional auditing roots of the firm," Mr Brindle said. And the firms will probably look very different in five years' time as the pace of change enables them to provide more services worldwide.

PwC, for example, will be the largest firm in what it calls enterprise resource planning — implementing technology that enables companies to operate the same systems worldwide. Projections in the merger documentation indicated that 55 per cent of fees in the new management consultancy division would derive from information technology implementation — the business which has made Andersen Consulting one of the most powerful consulting firms around. It is a far cry from traditional accountancy work.

But in the short term the key is going to be putting the two firms together and ensuring that resources are not being used to fight internal battles. So far the firms insist that most partners have not been distracted. "We haven't had the 'throwing the toys out of the cot syndrome'," as Mr Brindle puts it.

But the real test starts now and it will be a long time before the firm can be properly judged. Jim Wadia, head of Andersen Worldwide, said: "Nothing changes on July 1, 1998. But maybe on July 1, 2008, we may be able to look back and see a change."



Nick Land, Ernst & Young UK senior partner, left, and Colin Sharman, KPMG worldwide chairman, failed to bring off a merger of their two firms



Ian Brindle of PwC, above left, and Peter Smith, PwC UK senior partner, saw their merger succeed, despite misgivings by Brian Birkenhead, far right

Euro threat may beset unwary

Geoffrey Yeowart examines legal problems the currency may pose companies in EU member states

THE EURO will be introduced in 11 EU member states on New Year's Day 1999. Many UK businesses will be affected, even though the UK will be outside the "euro zone". Companies must examine in advance the legal issues that will arise and ensure that they are prepared.

It is essential to evaluate the impact on contracts. One question is whether continuity of contracts could be threatened. Where a contract is governed by the law of an EU member state, the position is reasonably clear. It was established in July 1997 by a Council Regulation, which is part of English law, that the introduction of the euro will not alter any term of a contract, or give a party the right unilaterally to alter or terminate a contract, unless agreed by the parties.

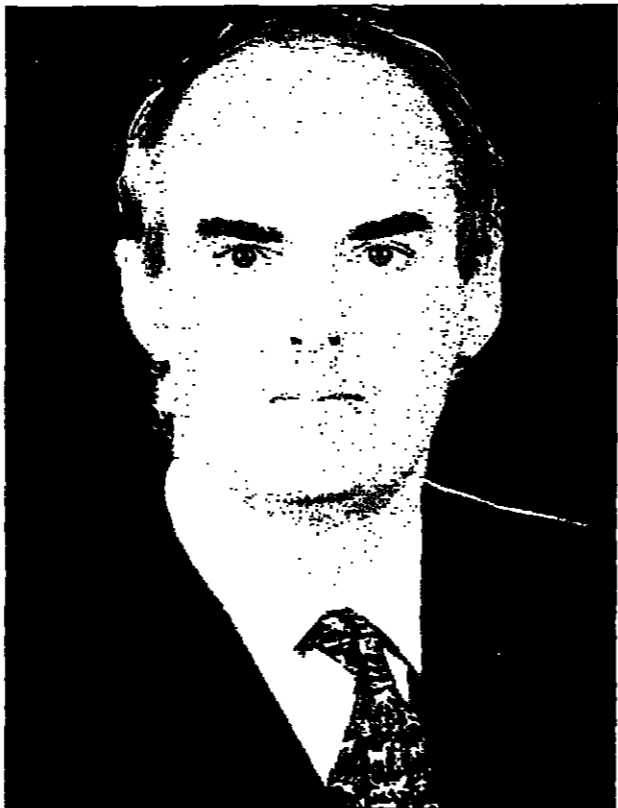
The legal position may differ in other jurisdictions. If the position is unclear, local advice should be sought or a continuity clause used. This requires careful drafting and should be based on a standard clause such as that suggested by the International Swaps and Derivatives Association.

Another question is whether

contracts may be affected if they use national interest rates or other pricing sources that will disappear because of monetary union. The English courts may imply a term that the nearest comparable successor rate should be adopted in the absence of a contrary intention by the parties. But this may not be easy to do.

In the international financial markets, trade associations are working with information providers to identify affected benchmark rates and to ensure designated replacement rates. Contracts should identify an appropriate successor rate. Changes in market conventions should also be considered. London interbank offered rate for euros will be quoted on the basis of interest over a 360-day year (sterling, the Belgian franc and the escudo now use a 365-day year).

The ecu (European currency unit) will be replaced by the euro at a conversion rate of one euro for one ecu on 1 January 1999. Where the private ecu is used in contracts, it is important to establish what type of ecu definition is used and whether the 1:1 conversion rate will apply.



Geoffrey Yeowart says preparation for the euro is essential

Equity and bond markets will be affected. A company will be able to issue new shares in any currency (including the euro from 1 January 1999). Companies may wish to dominate new issues of shares in euros, so that they can raise equity finance

in the new euro equity markets, match their capital base with euro earnings, meet investor demand or reflect their European status (many UK-listed companies also have secondary listings on other European stock exchanges). Issuers of debt securities

may also want to re-denominate them to the euro, round their nominal amount and switch to new conventions for euro securities. The International Primary Market Association is to provide wording for issuers who want to do this.

The euro will have a significant impact on systems. When acquiring new software, a company should include a contract term to ensure the software is "euro compliant".

A company may also receive questionnaires about its own "euro compliance". Answers should avoid giving a representation or warranty which, if it proves untrue, would be actionable. It is better to state, factually, what a company is doing to prepare for the euro.

The euro is likely to be the most widely used foreign currency in the UK for businesses. It will not be legal tender while the UK is "out". No person can be forced to accept it to pay a non-euro debt. But payments may be freely made in the UK if mutually agreed by the parties to a contract. Even though the euro is not expected to pose problems under English law, every company must assess the implications for its business.

Geoffrey Yeowart is a partner of Lovell White Durrant, London, and author of The Euro Guide to Legal Issues, published by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Directors all at sea over remit to report

THE IDEA of putting the top 260 finance directors in the UK on an ocean-going liner, sailing them to a point off the Jersey coast and then dropping anchor, is one that might at times have great appeal to investors and employees alike. It happened last weekend.

The occasion was the first Finance Directors' Forum. The idea is a simple one. Finance directors turn up free for two days of workshops, keynote speeches and think-tanks. People who might wish to sell their things pay to have access to them. It is a remarkably simple, and successful, system. It also gives the lie to the idea that senior people cannot cope with being away from their offices for more than a morning at a time. In a stimulating environment they had two and a half days to think and to network.

One of the topics they increasingly are thinking about is why on earth they devote so much time to producing an annual report and accounts for their companies which, by and large, no one reads. Brian Birkenhead, the

what the average shareholder wanted was a one-line remark about performance, a message from the chairman, lots of pictures and some narrative about the company's activities and an extremely detailed analysis of what the directors were being paid.

Mr Birkenhead's solution was simple: "Put it all on the Internet and let people find what they want for themselves." This annoyed some finance directors. Neil Chisman, the finance director at the hotel company Stakis and his group financial controller, Graeme Davidson, put a huge amount of effort into making this year's report and accounts understandable. They included everything from glossaries of accounting terms to the equivalent of fireside chats on topics such as depreciation. Mr Chisman felt that chucking the whole lot on to the Internet and letting investors go find it was not really measuring up to the responsibilities of trained accountants.

But the tide is turning in that direction. Mary Keegan, Price Waterhouse's European director of professional standards, told the workshop she was running that for the specialist investment community it was almost inevitable: "We are heading towards just downloading the information and letting the analysts work out what it means."

The answer is to provide the information, as the Tomorrow's Company project has suggested, in a pyramid structure. The summarised accounts could go to everyone. Beneath that would be reports aimed at specialists, such as environmental, employee or social reports, and then the mass of data would be available on the Internet.

This is the suggestion that the 100 Group put to Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade. She is said to be receptive to the idea.

All this ties in neatly with the work that the ASB is doing. It has made it clear that the annual report is no longer the primary source of investor information. At present the preliminary announcement is what moves the market. And normally they are un-audited and brief to the point of embarrassment. The ASB aims to make the annual financial reporting.

This would satisfy both sides of the argument. A proper document following reporting rules and carrying the imprimatur of independent assurance would be published. The rest of the data would be available electronically to all. Shipyards and Bristol fashion.



ROBERT BRUCE

John Bull sets up partners' PR test

PARTNERS at Deloitte & Touche were jacked in discussions this week over whether to run an advertisement consisting of "knocking copy" against the launch of the newly merged firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers. For some weeks Deloitte has been running advertisements emphasising, with the message "focusing only on clients", that they have not been distracted by such time-consuming nonsense as mergers. Picking up

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

on the strange "John Bull printing outfit style" of the jumbled letters used in PwC's logo they prepared copy in the same style with the slogan of "WholsFocusingOnlyOnClients" at the top. Only a dedicated search of the newspapers will reveal if they felt up to running it.

Naming of parts

CONFLICTING tales have emerged about why the new firm inherited its Pricewater-

houseCoopers name on clients and typesetters alike. Originally the stringing of the three names together was thought to reflect Cooper's insistence that, as usually happens in such merger circumstances where the last name of the trio is dropped a few years later, this time it was not going to happen.

But now that the doors of the new firm and — more importantly — the reception desk telephone lines have

opened up for business, a hidden agenda has emerged. The name, spoken as a greeting on the telephone, tends to put the emphasis on the last of the three names. As the partners keep emphasising, "communication is vital at this stage of the merger".

Global groan

THE WORDS of Chris Patten, last Governor of Hong Kong, at the Finance Directors' Forum last week

and will have had some resonance for all those global accountancy firms insisting that mergers were necessary to raise money for huge expansion into markets such as China.

He made several excruciating puns about the outrage of "pandering to China" and then commented: "So many businesses say they are in China for the long term — by which I assume they mean they aren't making any money."

ROBERT BRUCE

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Irwin: wants private operator

South Africa invites bidders for 'capped' lottery

By Jon Ashworth

SOUTH AFRICA is about to throw open the bidding for a national lottery, which will include a cap both on lottery profits and on the salaries paid to lottery executives.

GTech, the lead supplier to the UK National Lottery, is among potential bidders for the long-delayed South African game, which is expected to generate

revenues of up to R7 billion (£700 million) a year. Some 5 per cent of the lottery will be held by the National Empowerment Fund, channelling funds to black enterprises, and the Post Office will hold 15 per cent. The remaining 80 per cent will be held by the licensee.

A draft of the bidding document — or Request for Proposals — is expected soon, along with a list of potential bidders. GTech is certain

to make a play for the licence, although it faces steep competition from AWI, its main US lottery rival. Littlewoods, the UK pools group, is said to be interested, and Camelot, the UK lottery operator, may seek some involvement. A strong bid is expected from Scientific Games, the Georgia-based lottery company best known for its scratch-card expertise.

The cap on pay and profits is a direct response to experience in the UK, where Camelot has provided a ready target. Similar restrictions are certain to be imposed when the UK licence comes up for renewal in 2001. Richard Branson, who campaigned for a not-for-profit lottery in the UK, has been encouraging the South Africans not to make the same mistakes.

Alec Irwin, South Africa's trade and industry minister, said it would be in the best interests of all South Africans to establish a national lottery operated by an experienced private lottery company. Obstacles facing the successful bidder include an under-developed telecoms network and South Africa's high crime rate, which raises concerns about the security of retailers, the operator and individual prize winners.

GTech can point to its experience in launching a lottery in Brazil, which suffered from a similar lack of infrastructure. The successful South African bidder will have to invest up to R1 billion (£100 million) over five to seven years to build a sophisticated national lottery network. Final bids are due by September. The licence is expected to be awarded in December, with the lottery going into operation by the middle of 1999.

Prestbury sells £40m portfolio

Prestbury, the AIM-listed property group run by Nick Leslau and Nigel Wray of Burford fame, yesterday sold four investment properties for £40 million to Resolution Property at a small profit over book costs. The properties produce a net annual income of more than £3.73 million.

Investor buy
Sweden's Incentive AB, which changed its name to Gambro AB yesterday, has sold five million shares in appliance maker Electrolux to investor, the main investment vehicle for the Wallenberg family, for 164.90 crowns a share or £60 million. The deal takes the investor stake up to 21 per cent of the votes and 3.6 per cent of the shares and leaves Gambro, also part of the Wallenberg fold of companies, focused purely on medical technology.

UBS sale
UBS is to sell its Lugano-based private bank, BSI-Banca della Svizzera Italiana, and information technology company Bost Lab to the Italian insurer Assicurazioni Generali. UBS said the combined value of both acquisitions was SFr1.92 billion or £759 million and it expects to make a profit of SFr1 billion after taxes and minorities.

Dixons purchase
Dixons Motors has bought Cosmopolitan Motors, one of London's largest motorcycle retailers, for £15 million through its Carnell Motorcycles subsidiary. In the year to July, 1997, Cosmopolitan made pre-tax profits of £177,098 and at year end had net assets of £456,274.

Lookers deal
Lookers, the car dealer, has acquired the Rylands operations in Belfast for £3.3 million. Profit before tax of the acquired business was £267,000 in the year to end December. The shares remained unchanged at 105p.

Healthy profits
Associated Nursing, the healthcare group, raised pre-tax profits from £2.4 million to £3.3 million in the year to March. Earnings rose from 8.1p to 10.6p and the total dividend rises from 3.7p to 4.0p. The shares are unchanged at 170p.

Aegis sale
Sutcliffe Speakman, the specialty chemical group, has acquired Aegis Trading and its operating subsidiary, Joseph Storey, for £3.25 million, to be paid in cash. In the year ended April 30, Aegis Trading made pre-tax profits of £410,000 on £2.41 million sales.

Asian markets
Silvermines, the electrical equipment group, said that it had won £4 million orders in Asian markets during the first half — a 300 per cent increase in sales.

French sell state-owned GAN to mutual insurance group

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

FRANCE'S socialist-led Government has sold the state-owned insurer, the GAN, to the French mutualist Groupama for Fr17.25 billion (£1.7 billion).

The move, made public yesterday by Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the Finance Minister, will create the country's second biggest insurance group, with an annual turnover of more than Fr87 billion, but also provoke controversy.

Private insurance companies will see M Strauss-Kahn's decision as a red rag to a bull at a time when they are contesting what they say is the

preferential treatment enjoyed by France's powerful mutualist movement. The Finance Minister will also face accusations of nationalism after choosing Groupama ahead of four foreign firms.

M Strauss-Kahn said: "Nationality was not at issue. The candidates were judged equitably and transparently."

Groupama's offer to buy an 87.1 per cent stake in the GAN valued the insurer at Fr19.8bn.

Swiss Life made a higher bid but asked for a Fr7 billion guarantee linked, among other things, to the sale of the GAN's British subsidiary,

GAN Life, last year. The mutualist demanded a Fr2.9 billion guarantee. Bernard Delas, Groupama's chairman, pledged a Fr2 billion investment programme spanning five years, which he said would safeguard the jobs of the GAN's 6,700 employees.

M Strauss-Kahn said Groupama's financial package had swung the decision in its favour. But he is known to have come under pressure from unions concerned that Swiss Life would cut jobs.

M Delas says Groupama has Fr20 billion cash at its

disposal, no debts and a project that will inject renewed "dynamism" into the GAN, which had a 1997 turnover of Fr30.8 billion.

The state-owned group ran up accumulated losses of Fr40 billion between 1992 and 1996 as it followed the path laid down by the disaster-ridden French bank, Crédit Lyonnais. But it made a Fr284 million profit last year on the back of state subsidies worth about Fr20 billion.

Yesterday's announcement will upset a French financial community already angry at the Government's decision to

sell the bank, CIC, to another mutualist, Crédit Mutuel, for Fr13 billion.

Private insurers say mutualists benefit from tax and accountancy rules that give them an unfair advantage. Their case is backed by the European Commission, which said last month it would take France to court over its failure to incorporate EU insurance directives into French law.

Groupama started as an outsider in the race for the GAN, with analysts saying the Government could not afford to sell a second financial institution to a mutualist.



Franco Mancassola, chairman of Debonair, said he was encouraged by its ability to control costs while expanding

Debonair sues Italians over contract

By Martin Barrow

DEBONAIR, the low-fare airline based at Luton airport, is suing the regional government of Calabria in Italy for £30 million for allegedly reneging on a contract to operate from Lamezia and Reggio airports.

A five-year contract signed

in January was to have paved the way for the launch of scheduled flights to Turin, Rome, Florence and Bologna the following month. Debonair estimated the contract was worth £100 million. But the contract has yet to be implemented.

Yesterday Debonair reported a rise in annual losses to £16.6 million from £15.7 million in the year to March 31. Turnover more than doubled to £35 million from £14 million.

Franco Mancassola, chairman, said he was encouraged

by the airline's ability to control costs while expanding.

Debonair, which was listed on the fledgling pan-European Easdaq stock market in July 1997, saw year-on-year passenger loadings rise from 50 to 59 per cent in March and from 59 to 66 per cent in April.

Shoe stake handout for Town Centre investors

By Matthew Barbour

TOWN Centre Securities, the property group based in Leeds, is proposing to hand out its 15.1 per cent stake in Stylo, the shoe company, to its shareholders.

Edward Ziff, managing director of Town Centre, said: "We believe that the disappointing recent performance of Stylo shares does not reflect Stylo's long-term prospects, and we want to give our shareholders the choice of retaining those prospects."

Under the plan, each Town Centre shareholder would receive 6.9 Stylo shares for every 100 Town Centre shares. Town Centre has had a stake in Stylo since 1974. Since the purchase of Hush Puppies in 1996, Stylo's shares have fallen from 150p to yesterday's closing price of 55p.

"We know that the shoe retail industry has not been without its problems, but we believe the shares are fantastically undervalued," Mr Ziff said. Mr Ziff's brother Michael is chief executive of Stylo. Arnold Ziff, his father, is chairman of both companies.

The 15 per cent stake in Stylo, at 55p per share, has a market value of about £5 million. Town Centre, which owns 139 retail properties and seven car parks, is capitalised at £124 million. The group's shares were unchanged at 95p.

Business looks to crack the secret codes of computer crime



HACKERS were once dismissed by business as an insignificant collection of misfits interested only in trying to break into the Pentagon's military database. However, as technology has proliferated, computer criminals have begun to target many smaller businesses as well as multinationals and governments.

The problem has created a boom in IT security consultancy, and IBM, the US computer giant, has hired a team of "ethical hackers" to break into their clients' networks to pinpoint weaknesses.

According to consultants, the first question usually asked by victims of high-tech crime is "who would want to hack into our company?" Most often, hackers are disgruntled former employees who use their insider knowledge either to vandalise a computer network or gain commercially sensitive information to pass on to a competitor.

The results can be disastrous. As extranets — direct computer links between companies and their suppliers — become more popular, hackers can break in and find out what prices are being charged to competitors. Any kind of information that can be stored on a computer, from retailers' market research to software development, is potentially at risk.

But hacking is not all about computers. A popular catchphrase among the anorak-wearing population is "social engineering", which refers to gaining passwords or other insider information by good, old-fashioned deceit. In many cases, hackers have simply phoned an employee pretending to work for their company's IT department, asked them for a

general password, and been given it.

There are other ways of gaining access to systems. Hackers with enough computing power can run programs that generate thousands of combinations of numbers and letters a minute, in an attempt to guess passwords. Hackers can also secretly download "sniffer software" on to a company's network that reads every piece of information sent through the computer system, from employees' e-mails to customers' credit card numbers.

Consultants say the best way of stopping computer crime is by having a strict policy on simple issues such as passwords no generic passwords should be used, and individual passwords should be kept secret. In addition, "firewalls" should be installed in networks to filter what information can be passed through a company's computer system.

TECHNOLOGY that allows ambulances to change traffic lights ahead of them — thus increasing response times and improving road safety — is about to be tested in London. If successful, a multimillion pound contract to provide the technology throughout London, and possibly in other UK cities, will be offered. The leading bidder will be 3M, the US high-tech company.

CHRIS AYRES



Time difference: ambulances could respond quicker

Meristem drops on profits warning

By A Correspondent

SHARES in Meristem fell from 58½p to 39p after the specialty chemicals group warned the stock market that second-half profits would be "substantially below" earlier expectations and

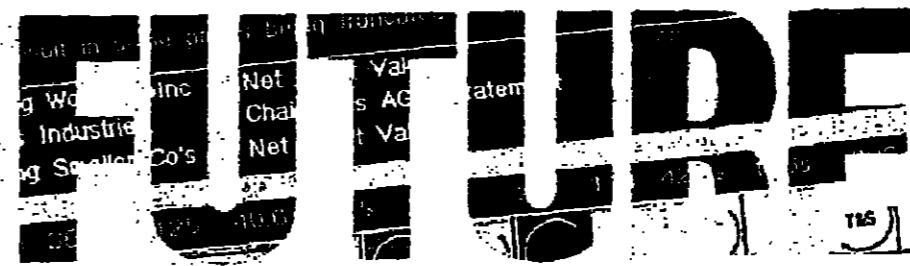
would also be down from last year's figures.

Meristem blamed a slowdown in demand at its process minerals division but was keen to emphasise that its formulated chemicals continue to trade acceptably. Meristem is to release half-

year figures on September 16. One broker reduced a full-year forecast from between £3.7 million and £4 million to between £2.4 million and £2.6 million before tax.

Analysts said problems at the process minerals operations reflected

expectations of reduced demand from detergent companies. The detergent market is unstable in the wake of the introduction of new products, such as detergent tablets, and the increasing switch from branded to "own brand" products.



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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Main table containing unit trust prices, organized by fund name, with columns for bid, offer, and percentage change.

WITHDRAWN advertisement with a large 'X' over the text and contact information for a London office.

Source: FT Information. * Yield expressed as CAGR (Compound Annual Return). ** Excludes 10% Stamp Duty. *** Prospective Charge deducted from capital. **** Ex-Cl. Charge.



NEW FILMS
An abrasive view of Kurt Cobain
PAGE 39

THE TIMES ARTS

DANCE
The man who partners Guillem
PAGE 41



The roar of the greenbacks

Hyping or, to put it more politely, marketing movies can double their budget. And in the end, does it really do the trick? Nigel Cliff reports

Have Hollywood's publicists developed a sense of humour? "Size does matter" is the tongue-in-cheek tagline for this summer's most overhyped blockbuster film, *Godzilla*. It refers, of course, to the film's agent of doom, a mutant lizard 200ft high and longer, as the building-sized posters in Cannes informed everyone, than the Carlton Hotel. But the most bloated aspect of this production is its publicity budget, recently estimated at \$120 million — the same as the film cost to make. "Marketing is becoming increasingly important for every film," says Peta Browne, a director of the PR company JAC, currently handling *The General*, which won John Boorman the Best Director award at this year's Cannes Festival. "But the major studios are playing a different game from the rest of us. They can do things we just can't, like flying journalists club class to the set for interviews."

'There's a lot you can do to create a buzz without spending money'

gas and *Sliding Doors*, and is now working on two Cannes award-winners, Ken Loach's *My Name is Joe* and Todd Haynes's *Velvet Goldmine*. "The serious media are more celebrity-driven than ever before, which makes it harder for us to get publicity for our films."

But those without the studios' bottomless pockets are not daunted. Andrea Klein, head of film sales at the British Film Institute, whose budget stretches to "thousands" rather than tens of thousands of pounds for each release, insists that the wealthier opposition makes her job "difficult, but not impossible. There's a lot you can do to create the right buzz without spending any money," she says. "You just have to be inventive."



Giving the people what they think they want: suitably raucous and saluting fans gather for a premiere of Madonna's much-hyped *Evita* in 1996

than \$300 million in American cinemas alone — but which, she says delicately, was "generally not perceived to be such a good film". Dignan, though he agrees with Klein that "you can't make a bad film into a success", admits marketing can do a lot — "the balance is 60-40, or 70-30, in favour of the film," he suggests.

There will always be an audience that follows the big campaigns," concedes Klein, "but there is another which doesn't respond to four-page colour ads." For this audience, reviews are all-important, and she acknowledges that her

sheer marketing strategy "only works if the critics love the film". Jonathan Rutter concurs: "Most of our films can be killed stone dead by bad reviews in the wrong publications," he says. His novel solution is "just to be honest" — to take on films he believes are worthwhile, and to "pluck the elements that shine from them". "The type of films we work on don't lend themselves to gimmicky campaigns," he adds.

Peta Browne is not averse to the odd gimmick in a good cause, but she, too, is wary of hype: she thinks "people feel

on marketing major films in America alone is now estimated by *The Wall Street Journal* at \$23-30 million, which only a few years ago was how much they cost to make. Dignan maintains that these figures are not excessive, and that there is no danger of publicity budgets spiralling out of control. "Of course we all get it wrong sometimes, but nobody is going to spend more than they think they can make back."

EXCLUSIVE OFFER THE TIMES

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A TASTE OF WHAT YOU WILL SEE AND SAVE

MOUNT GRACE PRIORY, Saddlebridge, is a hidden gem with herb gardens and reconstructed monks' quarters — the best-preserved Carthusian monastery in the country. Passport holders get a two-for-one adult ticket. There is free entry for Passport holders at the **SONO HOUSE MUSEUM**, Birmingham. At the former home of industrialist and entrepreneur, Matthew Boulton (1728-1809), displays tell the story of Boulton's life, and shows some of produce made at his factory: buttons, steam engines, swords, coins, silver and ormolu.

One of the most imaginative museums, the **IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM**, London SE1, tells the story of 20th-century conflict with weapons, paintings, battle memorabilia, and the sounds and smells of the Blitz. There is £1 off adult admission for Passport holders. Winner of an England for Excellence award, **SALISBURY AND SOUTH WILTSHIRE MUSEUM** is the home of the Stonehenge gallery, Pitt Rivers's great archaeological collection, the Salisbury Giant and Turner watercolours. There is £1 off adult admission for Passport holders.



CHANGING TIMES

Into the sewers

NOW an established fixture, the summer season in Holland Park has cornered the market when it comes to satisfying the craving of townies for something like country-house opera. John Allison writes. Standards have improved too. Most significantly, Holland Park has taken to programming rarities: this year they are Mascagni's *Iris* and Cilea's *L'Arlesiana*.

Justifiably neglected, one might say, *Iris*, revived again in this its centenary year. Quite why the production did not settle everyone's curiosity when it was new last summer is worrying: the story, just the kind that gives opera plots a bad name, charts

OPERA
Iris
Holland Park

the downfall of a Japanese village girl, her humiliation in a brothel and death in the sewers of a big city.

Nor does the climactic apotheosis music alter Mascagni's reputation as a "one opera" composer. *Iris* may actually be his eighth opera, but it contains nothing as memorable as the music for *Cavalleria rusticana*, in spite of its many colourful moments.

At least the score enjoys the strongest possible advocacy in this production, thanks to John Gibbon's conducting, full of idiomatic verve. Tom Hawkes's staging in Peter Rice's set is as enjoyable as the piece allows, but it creeps in places — literally, for during the prelude a balustrade on the pretty bridge came adrift and crashed on the stage.

Given the fragile dramaturgy and uninteresting music, it is hard to care much about *Iris*'s predicament, but Giselle Allen gives a strong, touching performance.

Gerard O'Connor has power as her blind father, but Geraint Dodd pushes his tenor too hard in the role of her playboy suitor, and Richard Whitehouse sings effectively without overcoming the cardboard characterisation of the brothel-keeper villain.

Full Marx for farce

BEFORE you have time to take your seat in the Royal Exchange's circus tent — pitched, somewhat incongruously, on top of the Barbican Centre — you are buttonholed by paparazzi, and gushed over by Jean Chailis's enormous hostess, Mrs Rittenhouse. Groucho Marx is in town, and for reasons known only to the writers George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind, he is guest of honour for the unveiling of a famous statue at Mrs R's society party.

According to the plot he is Captain Spalding, a big game hunter fresh from shooting pyjama-clad elephants in Africa. For everyone else he is the familiar nutty gag-machine from the 1920s with the tipsy eyeballs, fat cigar and a gait that suggests too much time bouncing on the back of a malevolent mule. Chico Marx (Joseph Alessi), the fake-Italian brother, swiftly joins the fray with his silly spoonerisms and sillier hat, followed on cue

THEATRE
Animal Crackers
Barbican

by the curly-haired Harpo, who proceeds to drop a ton of stolen cutlery all over the floor.

Emil Volk's production, now three months on the road, has far more in common with a strip cartoon than a piece of theatre. What's left of the 1930 film is brushed aside or used as a trampoline for more buffoonery. The cast charge from one door of the tent as Keystone Cops and come through another as Guinness-drinking Riverdancers. Coat tails are tied together. Sue Holland's preposterously vulgar Mrs Van Damme is goosed, and the warbling Mrs R is flattened in an American football offensive.

There is enough stage traffic to drive anyone into a road rage. Meanwhile the three-

strong band bash out schmaltzy tunes or cleverly play musical tag with, most notably, Toby Sedgwick's horripitating Harpo.

By any standards this is a wonderfully inventive production, but it clearly thrives on our nostalgic faith in these antique clowns. Normally, a farce that works on the how-long-can-we-get-away-with-it factor rarely gets away with much at all. It is a tribute to the Manchester Royal Exchange that they get away with as much as they do. The real reason for this is Ben Keaton's almost spooky empathy with Groucho.

He not only has Groucho's delivery down to a cigar-tapping T, but he improvises as freely with the audience as he does with shoes that ring like telephones. Marx fans will love it. The sensible will cringe.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

Bit parts raise the stakes

"IT WAS very long," said one woman with a Scandinavian accent as she made her way from the Abbey Theatre, after Patrick Mason's new production of *Saint Joan*. It is of course hard to deny that truth. But there is, nevertheless, in the dense vegetation of Shaw's language jungle, enough reason to sit a good deal longer than this production's three hours in the theatre.

Patrick Mason's completely fascinating version brilliantly updates the play's medieval setting to the First World War, adding sandbags and other icons of trench warfare and costumes that call to mind Renoir's *La Grand Illusion*, rather than Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. The time shift cleverly underlines Shaw's pessimism about history, replacing one occasion when Tommies moved bloodily through the fields of France to another 500 years later.

Even with Joe Vanek's design, which employs an arsenal of effects that includes everything from the colours of Rheims Cathedral's rose window projected on to the stage floor in great slabs of light, to incense that hovers across the auditorium like mustard gas,

THEATRE
Saint Joan
Abbey, Dublin

Shaw's drama remains essentially a word-powered work.

The dialogue certainly flows torrentially in Mason's production, and as saints, sinners, soldiers and royalty fire out glowing webs of finely woven argument there is little succour given for those lacking in concentration or stamina, but substantial rewards for everybody else.

In the past the title role has been dubbed "unplayable" and Jane Brennan certainly has some difficulties making the character comfortable in the company of Shaw's regiments of small but meticulously developed supporting roles. Indeed, her buoyant interpretation frequently seems more like an over-eager schoolboy than a savant country girl, and while she thoroughly develops the martial, hectoring aspect of the character, Brennan remains short on beautiful magnetism.

Things generally go better when Joan is elsewhere. Ian Price's cynical British overlord, Warwick, jousts brilliant-

ly with Des Cave's Cauchon — a cleric who, one suspects, will always be far too pragmatic to make it through the Pearly Gates.

Both share with Tom Hickey's Inquisitor the skill of making closely argued debates on the origins of the Protestant tradition, the birth of the nation state, and arcane issues of heresy both funny and also unexpectedly engaging.

The men of action get strong support, particularly from Mark O'Regan's strange, bedraggled, Toad-like Dauphin, a lonely monarch with a firm grasp on his own mediocrity. O'Regan cleverly plays him for laughs without losing the character's shocking bleakness.

If the production has its flaws, and the weak casting of the lead role probably has to count as one of these, Mason has been particularly agile in finding actors to make an antique way of writing and speaking not just palatable to the modern ear, but clearly important. In some cases, and *Saint Joan* is a classic instance, a play is long because it has a lot to say.

LUKE CLANCY

مركز ابن الأحمى

NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown discovers a romantic comedy with a plot that could have come straight from the 1930s

Off the road with a battered old Ford

Honestly, the things an actress must do these days to be a mainstream movie star. You must stand in tropical waters, act the helpless maiden and quake with fear because something slippery has entered your underwear. Harrison Ford then wades to the rescue, puts his hands down the front of your pants — the camera, of course, peers intently here — and finally retrieves a snake. I hope Anne Heche, famously lesbian to boot, thought the pay cheque was worth it.

This horrible moment, perhaps the low point of the year so far, is not particularly typical, but it does indicate the backward nature of *Six Days Seven Nights*. The plot hails from a computer database of Hollywood romantic comedies. Two antagonistic people are thrown together. She is a smart, neurotic magazine editor from New York (in the 1930s she would have been Claudette Colbert); he is a happy-go-lucky freight-plane pilot working the Hawaiian islands (Clark Gable, naturally). While holidaying with a fiancé clearly meant to be ditched (Ralph Bellamy's old role, badly played here by David Schwimmer), she hitchhikes a ride in the pilot's battered plane. They crash-land in a storm on a deserted island, with only their egos and hormones for company. Guess what happens.

The astonishing thing about this antiquated trifle is that some of it, despite the dusty air and the snakes in the pants, remains mildly entertaining. Under Ivan Reitman's direction, Ford and Heche make a tolerably pleasant star duo. Ford himself seems rejuvenated. In films such as *Patriot Games* and *The Fugitive*, the man's face was frozen in a surly grimace; now he smiles, he gets drunk, he shows off his chest and makes jocular remarks about his plane's equipment: "We may be old, but we're sturdy!" How many vitamin pills has he taken?

As for Heche, despite the script's crass moments of romantic intimacy, the film still employs this fast-rising player more fruitfully than either *Volcano* or *Wag the Dog*. She is allowed to be what she is good at, a quicksilver comedienne. Her love for Ford may be as fake as the film's computer-generated storm-clouds, but the illusion is well-sustained as the script elongates the pair's predicament with flare-gun blunderings and pirate attacks. *Six Days Seven Nights* could be much better; it could also be worse. Either way, the moment the film ends — not before — you can forget all about it.

After the broad brush-strokes of *Six Days Seven Nights*, *Love and Death in Long Island* has the feel of Japanese calligraphy. The film, indeed, appears so small and delicate that it almost floats away on the breeze. Luckily, this adaptation of Gilbert Adair's novel features John Hurt, who supplies some ballast in his starring role as the fastidious London literary back number, Giles De'Ath. Giles's reclusive life, previously untainted by the 20th century, is shaken up by a chance encounter on the cinema screen with Ronnie Bostock, supporting hunk in the American teen movie *Hotpants College II*. It is love at first sight. To

Six Days Seven Nights
Odeon West End
12, 108 mins
Tolerable, forgettable romantic comedy

Love and Death in Long Island
Metro, 15, 93 mins
Sophisticated jape with John Hurt

Grease
Empire, PG, 110 mins
John Travolta struts again

Kurt & Courtney
Screen on the Green
15, 95 mins
Contentious rock doc by Nick Broomfield

research his obsession, he buys a television and a video recorder and fills a scrapbook with cuttings from magazines such as *Hollywood's Most Snogable Fellas!!*. He is then compelled to travel to Long Island, Bostock's home, to meet his idol face to face, played, appropriately, by Jason Priestley, a hunk himself from the television series *Beverly Hills 90210*.

Adair's novel, fastidiously adapted by the director, Richard Kwietniowski, plays amusingly with the clash of cultures, high and low, British and American, and the twin powers of love and cinema. The tone of dry, rather precious fooling cuts out many chances for showing real feelings — of longing and pain — but Hurt at least hints at them as he enters the adolescence he never had before and tastes the experience of love. The London scenes in the first half quiver with knowing details of the metropolitan cultural life. Early scenes in America hold out a promise of more wry fun. Here is Giles De'Ath pondering whether he should place his shoes for cleaning outside his motel chalet door; here is a reference to the poet Rimbaud, misheard as Rambo.

For Kwietniowski, the film marks his feature debut after stylish short squibs such as *Flames of Passion*, a gay reworking of *Brief Encounter*, also made with Oliver Curtis as director of photography. Visually, *Love and Death* is far less daring, though its technical fluency is impressive. Unfortunately, the more the film stays put in America, the more the material wears thin. De'Ath uses the time to fan Bostock's ego, with talk of his acting's Shakespearean resonance. Bostock is bemused, unaware of the passion that motivates his admirer. Hurt's performance,



Been there, seen that: Harrison Ford and Anne Heche wash up on a deserted island to find themselves stranded in the rent-a-plot romantic comedy *Six Days Seven Nights*

a cunning mixture of innocence and guile, affords many pleasures; but the film still gives us too much time to twiddle our thumbs, waiting for feelings to be consummated or frustrated, rather than blanketed in neat little jokes. Regrettably, by the end of the day, you are left with that Chinese meal feeling.

There is nothing evanescent about *Grease*, that breezy fantasy of high-school life in the 1950s, first created on stage by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey in Chicago in 1971. A new production of the musical is currently playing in London. So is Paramount's 1978 film version, brought back to life for better or worse for its twentieth anniversary with digital sound and spruced-up colour. Was John Travolta ever so trim? He must have been, for there he is, cleft chin and hair quiff in

position, strutting about in a flaming pink shirt with matching hankie and socks, pursing his lips from time to time as Danny Zuko, the coolest dude at Rydell High. He is, in short, hilarious. And Olivia Newton-John is not far behind, blonde fringe dancing blandly over her forehead, as Sandy, the girl whose summer romance with Danny causes him a severe image problem once the new term starts. But why am I bothering with the plot? The film rarely does: it gets rolled away for minutes on end while the school gangs, the T-Birds and Pink Ladies smoulder and flounce, and Hollywood veterans such as Eve Arden and Joan Blondell pop in and out with smart remarks.

As is often the case, time does strange things to a popular favourite. In 1978, the retro styling of Randal Kleiser's film was seen to be part of the fun. Now the aura of knowingsness has vanished: placed next to the density and speed of today's product, *Grease* looks empty-headed enough to have been made, not just set, in the 1950s. It does nothing with nostalgia except serve it up in a garish lump. This is no

crime, though it does make *Grease* a film best left to pop-culture watchers, fashion historians, John Travolta groupies and the old at heart. They should have a ball.

Twenty years ago, Nick Broomfield's films bore titles such as *Behind the Rent Strike* or *Juvenile Liaison*. They were militant reports from among Britain's dispossessed. People change with the times, of course; though it is hard not to wish for a touch of the old commitment as you watch *Kurt & Courtney*. Broomfield's latest safari

through the jungle of American sleaze. Much-worshipped rock star Kurt Cobain and his feisty widow Courtney Love are his subjects: a worthwhile pair, on the face of things, though the director's tactic of rumbling upon interviewees, mike in hand, camera rolling, limits the insights on offer. Broomfield chases, then drops, conspiracy theories that suggest Cobain's supposed suicide was a cloak for murder, and lines up people happy to implicate Love herself (including her own father). The theoretical justification for all

this is to demonstrate the way the media's information is controlled; the film itself pointedly has patches of talk and music missing, thanks to Love's iron grip (and concern for libel laws). But what is the practical result? Some tabloid titillation: knockabout comedy with thugs, paparazzi and the pharmaceutically challenged; a few moving memories of Cobain's childhood; and the usual scenes of Broomfield getting nowhere on the phone or blundering in where he is not wanted. This time, it is not enough.

'Embarrassing'

Every week, young film fans discuss the latest releases...

SIX DAYS AND SEVEN NIGHTS
Alison Juliard, 20: *Friends* star David Schwimmer turns up briefly to prove that he can only give one kind of performance — a bad one.

Leslie Isaiah Thomas, 20: Anne Heche is glorious. She is the film's only saving grace.

Emma Rolph, 19: It felt like six days and seven nights just watching it.

quite frankly I was embarrassed for him.

GREASE
Alison: You'll lose control — it's electrifying!
Leslie: It's definitely the one you want to see. You'll be strutting out of the cinema.

Emma: I'd forgotten how good Travolta can be.

KURT & COURTNEY
Alison: It's a detailed portrait of a tragic life, but it made for



rather depressing viewing.
Leslie: Courtney Love comes across like the Anti-Christ. Can anyone really be that horrible?
Emma: This documentary about Kurt Cobain's life is riveting. It has to be seen to be believed.
Carl: It brought home to me the hell that drugs can place you in.

A little pizza his heart

NEW ON VIDEO

chronicler of Generation X, and the words come from Talk Radio playwright Eric Bogosian. The characters drink, prattle, and test their friendship on the night a college chum turned rock star drives up in a stretch

limousine to rekindle old memories. Excellent casting of fresh faces (Giovanni Ribisi, Steve Zahn), good dialogue and Linklater's sympathetic handling all make for an absorbing film. Available to rent.



Closest love: Anthony Barrile as a gay actor takes a bit of a shine to his unsuspecting room-mate, Nick Scotti, in Tony Vitale's *Kiss Me Guido*

GUILTRIP
Metrodome, 15, 1996
TERSE, original and disturbing Irish drama about a bad marriage in a country with no divorce laws, from writer-director Gerard Stembridge (who is new to cinema). Andrew Connolly plays an army corporal, quiet but dangerous, who expects his every word to be obeyed. At night he returns drunk to his bored wife (Jasmine Russell) and a furious row. Flashbacks then take us through their day and show the passions rising. The visual style is blunt, but the story is so involving that you never pine for pretty pictures.

WAITING FOR GUFFMAN
Columbia TriStar, 15, 1996
CHRISTOPHER GUEST, one of the screenwriters and stars of Rob Reiner's *This Is Spinal Tap*, continues the "mockumentary" tradition in this slim but endearing comedy documenting the efforts of a fey stage director called Corky St Clair to mount a musical show celebrating the 150th anniversary of the town of Blaine, Missouri. His cast are amateurs (the town dentist, travel agent and company), though their tantrums would not disgrace Broadway, where St Clair wants this show to transfer. Probably too specialised for mainstream cinema audiences (in Britain, the film has shot straight to video), but showbusiness buffs should have a ball. The cast includes Guest himself, Eugene Levy, Catherine O'Hara and Parker Posey. A rental release.

GEOFF BROWN

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love and death ON LONG ISLAND

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LISTINGS

Whiskey Galore staged

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LONDON

EVELYN GLENNE/NORMAN PERRYMAN: One of the world's leading percussionists plays a variety of instruments from maracas to timpani...



A man and his hat. Ivor Cutler poses on the South Bank

IVOR CUTLER: The master of small poetic miracle and dry humour graces the Midweek Festival of the South Bank...

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NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London. House full, returns only. Some seats available. Seats at all prices.

- THE CHANGELING: Tasso's Steevens. First recipient of the James Merces-Archer Award directs this blood-soaked Jacobean tragedy... HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE: Paula Vogel's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama...

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

Geoff Brown's choice of the best movies

- NEW RELEASES: GIRLS' NIGHT: (15) Guesdem British comedy with tears, with Julie Walters and Brenda Blethyn... THE OBJECT OF MY AFFECTION: (15) Jennifer Aniston hopes her gay roommate will help her bring her baby...

VISUAL ART: John Russell Taylor on what two British artists learnt from their wartime service



The naked truth: Rodrigo Moynihan's The Medical Inspection leaves us in no doubt about his views on the dehumanising effects of war

Forged in the crucible of war

War has a nasty way of embroiling even the most unwilling members of the community. As the current series of exhibitions at the Imperial War Museum devoted to the official war artists of the Second World War keeps demonstrating, some artists not normally associated with war and politics were roped in anyway...

Rhythm and hues

In the race for the elusive crossover dollar, the Soweto String Quartet are not yet up there with the violinist Vanessa-Mae — but that is possibly only a matter of time. The quartet, founded by the violinist Sandile Khemese, ought to appeal to the same constituency as the Penguin Cafe Orchestra...

PAINTING

Scenes from the battlefield

On the Swiss bayou

For ten days every June, New Orleans takes over the small Swiss resort of Ascona, at the northern tip of Lake Maggiore. Louisiana accents predominate in the open-air restaurants and musicians mingle with the holiday crowds...

JAZZ

joined by the Dutch Happy Feet band, which was at its best jamming with its American counterparts. This open-ended jam-session atmosphere is unique on the world's festival circuit. New York trombonist Dan Barrett and the Sydney-based trumpeter Tom Baker could be found jamming until the small hours in an international line-up...

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DANCE

A hunk at the ballet

ARTS

TOMORROW 5
New pop albums reviewed

Comeback king steps into the light

DANCE: Allen Robertson meets Jonathan Cope, Sylvie Guillem's leading man

This is his golden moment. Over the next month, as the Royal Ballet takes up residence at the London Coliseum, Jonathan Cope will be dancing the choicest roles in the repertoire. Not only that, he will be partnering Sylvie Guillem, the most glamorous ballerina of the decade.

Many punters would have been willing to bet that he would never get to this point. And, in truth, Cope's career has had more than its fair share of full stops. In addition to the work-related injuries which occasionally plague every dancer, Cope can recall in the time he cracked a rib because his bike was slammed into by a car jumping a red light. Then there was the frightening mystery illness which sidelined him for much of this year. Doctors thought, but have never been able to verify, that he had been infected with toxoplasmosis.

"I had every test under the sun, but I'll never really know what it was. All I knew was that I felt sick and wanted to sleep 22 hours a day." After a flurry of indecisive opinions, one stumped medic suggested removing his tonsils. That seemed to do the trick and he quickly began to regain his strength, but there had been anxious months when it looked as if his performing career had seen its final curtain.

Even more dramatically, at the age of 27, Cope and his wife, the former ballerina Maria Almeida, actually opted to retire. That was back in 1990, and the couple's premature decision sent shockwaves through the dance world. "I was doing too much," Cope insists, "and I was slated by the critics all the time because they were sick of seeing me."

"If I'd had a better mental attitude, maybe I could have handled it. But the thing about ballet is that you're in it from the age of six and you've never made a conscious decision to be a dancer; it all just unfolds. Then, suddenly you reach an age when you wonder what else is out there. I had to find out."

It took him the better part of two years to come to the conclusion that he had made a mistake. Finally, having had more than enough of sitting on the sidelines, Cope swallowed his pride and asked Anthony Dowell, the Royal's artistic director, if he could have his old job back.

Nobody was happier about his change of heart than Guillem. Now, some six years past his self-imposed exile, Cope has virtually become Guillem's sole London partner.

Small wonder. He can showcase a woman as few other men in the business can. At more than 6 ft tall,



The quiet star: despite his high-profile partnering of the dazzling Sylvie Guillem, Jonathan Cope has not got "one of those egos that demand to be centre stage all of the time"

Cope is capable of handling even the tallest, strongest and most demanding of dancers. Add to this his dark good looks — critics are fond of dubbing him "a Greek god" — and you have a ballerina's dream. And on top of everything, the calmly assured Cope is devoid of the egomania which drives most star performers.

"Yes," he agrees. "I haven't got one of those egos that demand to be centre stage all of the time. Maybe that's not a good thing in this business, but that's my character."

Does being so closely associated with such a renowned celebrity ever make him feel as if he is Mr Guillem?

"I'm very aware that she's a big international star, if that's what you mean. And she is totally unique. At the moment I don't mind if the

audience is there because they want to see her and might never even have heard my name."

Guillem is legendary not only for her exceptional artistry but also for her fiery and opinionated temperament. "Some people are frightened of her strong character," Cope says, "but it gets her where she's going."

"She enjoys giving management and the media a difficult time, but she's very loyal to her partners. She feels that if somebody's on her side then she'll stand by them."

"Immediately they are against her, well ... With the hiss of a cornered snake, he forms his forefingers into a cross like some hapless virgin trying to ward off Dracula. "In that case," he laughs, "I don't envy you, whoever you are."

"Sylvie gave me quite a hard time initially. I was terrified, really

scared, because I was just this young English boy and she was already one of the top dancers in the world. She used to tell me absolutely everything I had to do (to make her look her best on stage) so I had a million and one things to think about. But just before we did our first performance together, she came up to me in the wings, grabbed my wrist, looked me straight in the eyes and said one word: 'calm'. 'We've been all right ever since.'"

This summer's triple crown of roles — *Swan Lake*, *Manon*, *Raymonda* — is enough to placate any dancer. But, like Jim Carrey dying to play Hamlet or Robin Williams longing to have a go at King Lear, Cope, the handsome ballet prince par excellence, would love to have a crack at comedy. His first choice would be Frederick

Ashton's bucolic, sunshined-filled *La Fille mal gardée*. "I thought it might have been fun to see two big lanky people have a go at that, but it's not something that appealed to Sylvie." Still, he has few complaints with the casting department.

At the moment, Cope says, he is happier than he has ever been. "OK, I'm about to be 36 and I know my dancing days are numbered. Dance is cruel that way: just at the point when you really begin to understand and enjoy what you're doing, your body starts to let you down. But I don't think about that. I know I can keep in top form for three or four more years. Besides, if you start to think, 'Oh, God, I'm getting old', then mentally, you're already halfway there. So what I'm doing is just

enjoying it. Like they say, 'one day at a time'."

"I was watching the World Cup the other night and I was shouting at the telly, 'Bring on the 18-year-old!' Then, all of a sudden, I thought, 'What am I saying?'"

"No, I've got nothing to complain about. A dancer is supposed to be very selfish. All you're meant to think about is, 'Do I feel good? Am I well? Am I eating correctly? Sleeping well?' And then suddenly you've got two kids [a four-year-old daughter and a one-year-old son] and you've got to forget all that. When the baby is crying in the middle of the night because he's hungry, he doesn't care if I'm a star. He just wants to eat."

● *The Royal Ballet appears in five productions at the London Coliseum, July 7-August 1. Tel: 0171-632 8300*

Lorca comes home

Granada, once described by the great guitarist Andres Segovia as a "place of dreams, where the Lord put the seed of music in my soul," is the perfect setting for a festival. Artists have long been aware that few places stimulate the senses like this Andalusian city, and that few have more inspiring venues for performance. Indeed, the festival's roots go back earlier than its official birth in 1952 to a contest organised by Falla and Lorca in the 1920s and even to concerts held last century in the Alhambra.

Though it has a long history, the Granada Festival has not stayed still. It is no longer the Salzburg of the South, a glamorous summer festival offering big stars. Funding structures have changed, and with money now coming mostly from the region rather than central government the budget has shrunk. But if there is a

FESTIVAL

Spanish translation for "necessity is the mother of invention" the festival director Alfredo Araçil will surely know it: a composer himself, he has put together inspired and inspiring programmes.

This year's festival, where the many Spanish artists are being joined by foreign guests including Finland's Lahti Symphony Orchestra and The Sixteen from Britain, celebrates a number of important anniversaries. Most significant is the centenary of the birth of Lorca, whose poetry has inspired countless works of music and dance. Also being commemorated are the centenaries of the death of the writer Angel Ganivet, another local son, and the end of the Spanish colonies overseas, while the death in 1598 of Philip II is being marked too.

Both the literary themes came together in the opening concert, given late at night by the Lahti musicians in the open courtyard of the Palace of Charles V. The programme was dark, even uncompromising, for a festival launch: Shostakovich's Fourteenth Symphony, an unremittingly gloomy piece based on 11 poems dealing with death, was the main work. Settings of Lorca form the basis of the first two movements.

The orchestra's music director, Osmo Vänskä, gave a concentrated and bleak account of the score, and was a considerable accompanist to the two Finnish soloists. Camilla Nylund revealed a strong, Nordic-sounding soprano yet plenty of temperament in the Spanish numbers, and the bass Sami Laitinen was at his most eloquent in *O Delius*.

Jacobo Durán-Loriga's *Oscuro Borealis*, a homage to Ganivet, was a festival commission. Even here there was all its humorous take on comic-strip heroes, presents dance as sharply defined as you could wish.

But the revelation of the festival so far is the work of Boris Charmatz. In *Aan enen tionton*, this young French choreographer and two other dancers perform linked solos on three stacked-up platforms. Naked except for white T-shirts, the performers seem exceptionally vulnerable but it is the weighty, free-flowing forms of the dance that make them strong. Charmatz is a talent to watch out for; and the discovery of new talent is what really makes a festival like Montpellier worthwhile.

● *Montpellier Danse '98 runs until July 5 (00 33 46 618 300)*

JOHN ALLISON

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ONE OF the most successful issues so far in the Chandos series of popular Italian operas in English. America provides Cynthia Haymon for Mimì and very good she is, too, much better than at Covent Garden in this role a few years ago. She uses her silvery tone to great effect in the first act, telling her life story very simply and slowly under the sure guidance of conductor David Parry. By the third act, when she has seen more of Paris life, Haymon's Mimì uses a firmer sound, before physical frailty overcomes her. A very well thought-out performance.

For the rest, Chandos shows off the best of British. Dennis O'Neill is an impetuous Rodolfo, with excellently articulated singing. His sobs at the end are calculated to reach exactly the same reaction from the listener. Alan Opie's Marcello is the sensitive one among the Bohemians, despite his rows with Lin in warm voice and never overdoing things in the clear song, but lacking the cast's diction of the rest of the cast.

Alastair Miles copes well with the whiskey translation before going off to hock

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498.

his coat: *Venerable garment*. And there are two characteristically neat cameos from Andrew Shore. Altogether an excellent introduction to the old tear-jerker.

ORCHESTRAL
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LINDBERG
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Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra/Saraste
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ONE OF the great events at last year's Proms was the premiere of Magnus Lindberg's exuberant *Feria* by the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra under Jukka-Pekka Saraste. Now comes a splendidly recorded disc of the work from the same forces, capturing its explosive quality and raw, visceral power. The title alludes to Spanish festivities and there is certainly a celebratory mood about it, though there are also climaxes of scrunchy, gut-wrenching dissonance.

Similar pile-ups of massive sonorities occur in *Arena*, which, like *Feria*, culminates in a broad neo-Romantic melody of Berg-like richness. *Corrente II*, first heard at the Barbican's Tender in the North Festival in 1992, is, as its title implies, more mobile, with rhythmic patterns repeated in ostinato figurations, though it too features aggregates of awesome density alternating with more tranquil passages.

All three pieces are powerful, individual statements by a composer beholden neither to mysticism nor superficial mechanistic trends. Refreshing, exhilarating and not to be missed.

★ Worth hearing
★★ Worth considering
★★★ Worth buying

RECITAL
Hilary Finch

BEETHOVEN
Sonatas Op 10, No 1 & Op 111
Lars Vogt
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*** £16.49

THOMAS MANN'S reference in *Doktor Faustus* to "haggard C minor, with its wan, wild fire" has clearly inspired the young German pianist Lars Vogt in his new exploration on disc of the C minor Beethoven. The early Sonata, No 5 (Op 10, No 1) flames ahead so that we feel the heat of its rhythmic energy almost physically. And its slow movement is never too slow to obscure the clarity of its melodic contours and the force of its fugal harmonic moves.

Beethoven's last sonata, the Op 111, is of course the great test. *Brio* and *appassionato* are qualities which Vogt possesses in no small measure; and the sheer excitement of his pushing against the sonata's tough C minor resistance is remarkable. But in the *Arietta* and its variations I would have liked a little more depth of resonance in this bright, unyielding acoustic and a greater sense of the vast distances of its musical terrain as well as the thrill of exploring it.

The real thrills, though, are in the brilliant fingerwork, fused with the searing clarity of Vogt's imaginative vision, in the Variations in C minor which Beethoven wrote between the *Appassionata* Sonata and the Fourth Piano Concerto.

★ Worth hearing
★★ Worth considering
★★★ Worth buying

In Montpellier, Christopher Bowen finds fancy footwork off the sports field

Footie fever without a ball

Despite all evidence to the contrary, France has not been turned into a giant football pitch. While the world's television sets may be tuned to 24-hour coverage of the *Coupe du Monde* and the host nation appears to be reveling in the odd riot notwithstanding in the party atmosphere, normal life goes on.

Of course, in France life is normally pretty festive at this time of year, as the country's summer arts festivals kick into high gear. In Montpellier, for instance, they know a thing or two about fancy footwork. One of the first locations for France's impressive network of regional choreographic centres, the southern town has hosted an annual dance festival since 1981.

Under Jean-Paul Montanari's direction, this event has become a magnet for the world's major — and mainly contemporary — dance ensembles, as well as a showcase for French dance.

In previous years, Montanari has themed the event, and he was expected to reflect Montpellier's status as a *Coupe du Monde* host for the 18th festival. But any notion of a theme seems to have been abandoned in a festive mix of big names, grand events and new talent.

Not that the World Cup has been entirely ignored. There was a decidedly sporty look to the festival opener, Patrice Barthès's *Dry Wet*. Staged within the town's Olympic swimming pool, this site-specific work utilised not only the talents of Barthès's own dancers, but underwater cameramen and a team of synchronised swimmers. With their robotic movements, this later ensemble looked — not surprisingly — a bit like fish out of water in the "dry" choreography on the sides of the pool. In their adopted element, however, their supremely graceful actions lent a



Going swimmingly: Patrice Barthès's complex *Dry Wet*

bunch of agitated meercats, she was sending them flying with movements that seemed to explode in all directions. Even Castaflore's *Anthrop*, for all its humorous take on comic-strip heroes, presents dance as sharply defined as you could wish.

But the revelation of the festival so far is the work of Boris Charmatz. In *Aan enen tionton*, this young French choreographer and two other dancers perform linked solos on three stacked-up platforms. Naked except for white T-shirts, the performers seem exceptionally vulnerable but it is the weighty, free-flowing forms of the dance that make them strong. Charmatz is a talent to watch out for; and the discovery of new talent is what really makes a festival like Montpellier worthwhile.

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AMERICA'S SHAME
Close ties to slavery

BOOKS

SUBLIME SUBURBIA
Anne Tyler's latest novel

From Hamlet to Hamnett: Peter Ackroyd admires a commentary teasing out the influences upon one of England's greatest poets

Native Auden rediscovered



W. H. Auden: his poems drew upon the landscape of his childhood and there was "an eternal tie between himself and England"

There is a disquisition, in this erudite and informative commentary, upon the nature of blue in one of W. H. Auden's poems. It is "the colour of recent corpses" but also "the male colour". It is reminiscent of Stephen Spender whose eyes were the colour of bluebells and who laughed at the sound of "a carillon of bells". It is typical of John Fuller's style that so many allusions and associations should be compressed together, in that respect imitating Auden's own tightly packed verse.

with the fugitive memories of other reading. Whether it is necessary to tease out all the references is another matter; we may then run the risk of obscuring "lunar beauty" with its history, although there is perhaps a certain piquancy in knowing that within 17 lines of one poem there are allusions to Heidegger's *Being and Time*, Isherwood's *Down There On a Visit*, Goethe's *Faust*, Groddek's *Exploring The Uncolours* and Robert Briffault's *The Mothers: A study of the origin of sentiments and institutions*. Auden

but he also establishes the larger English tradition which the poet was able effortlessly to evoke: throughout his work there are allusions to Skelton and to Blake, Housman and Hopkins. Unlike Pound and Eliot, who had with great difficulty to conjure up a tradition of their own, Auden had one already at hand. So Fuller writes of "the eternal tie between himself and England" as well as his "rediscovered Englishness".

In that sense prosody may be more important than any apparent theme, and Auden once remarked that meaning itself is "the pattern of growth determined during construction". He is not versifying a set of principles, in other words, and there are in fact passages of the *Commentary* which suggest that Fuller takes Auden's beliefs more seriously than the poet ever did.

The problem is, again, one of form. Once the principles or themes of the poetry are taken out of their poetic contexts, all too often they seem obvious and unobscure. Auden's breezy didacticism allowed him to avoid any serious thought — he was a poet, after all, not a philosopher — but when rendered in plain prose his psychologism seems merely silly and his pronouncements on matters of theology or epistemology often absurd. It could even be argued that Auden used in order to protect himself against the unsettling power of his own lyric genius; they were a shield against self-knowledge. John Fuller himself provides many interesting commentaries upon, and criticisms of, individual works, but it is probably too late to care about Eros and Anima.

Other kinds of explication are more novel. Given the biographical appetite by which Auden has already been consumed, it was inevitable that Fuller should be required to tease out some of the more private origins of the verse. It may or may not be helpful to learn that the exquisite *Lullaby* was addressed to a boy of 14; perhaps the connection reaffirms the universality of love. We may not be able to consider poems as Auden conceived of islands

— "of mysterious origin", as Fuller puts it, "and of equally unknown destination" — but detailed biographical explication may not necessarily provide the right kind of explanation. The minutiae of life should sometimes remain minute. Yet there is much here of particular interest. Fuller demonstrates how Auden would move lines from one poem to another, add stanzas at a later date, and occasionally indulge in mild acts of self-censor-

ship. The poet kept a notebook in which he jotted down odd words, although his use of imagery remained constant. Fuller notes, for example, "Auden's many uses of the desert as a place of anxiety". There is another kind of continuity, also, as Fuller remarks upon the extent to which Auden's later poems come "curiously close" to the earliest work. In one of his last poems, *Dark-green upon Distant Heights*, for example, Auden returns to the

lead-mining landscape of his childhood as if in tribute to his original inspiration. That inspiration has been enduring in more than one sense. Auden's reputation as a great English lyric poet has not been eclipsed by time or fashion; he is perhaps the greatest since Tennyson, and certainly no one has equalled him since his death. This *Commentary*, then, can be seen as a piece of fitting homage.



Faber, £20 ISBN 0 670 88106 9

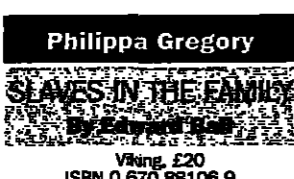
was, on occasion, educating his readers.

Some of his sources, however, go far deeper. Much of his childhood was spent in a Pennine landscape, and Fuller notes that one of Auden's principal influences was not the Bible or Shakespeare but Thomas Sopwith's *An Account of the Mining Districts of Alston Moor*, published in 1833; Fuller is also able to provide map references for an area of Co Durham which appears in *Paid On Both Sides*. No better example could be found for the theory that only from the local can the universal emerge.

Auden's affection for the English landscape is also part of a larger affection for origins. Fuller refers to Old English poetry as a direct influence upon Auden's earlier verse.

A family shackled to its history

Edward Ball, an American journalist, is the descendant of the Ball family of South Carolina which exploited more than 4,000 African slaves before the American Civil War destroyed their fortune. This book is his attempt to discover the extent and the nature of their slave owning.



Viking, £20 ISBN 0 670 88106 9

The story starts with Elias Ball, a 17th-century Cornishman who worked the fertile rice-growing riverbanks with the labour of imported African slaves. The family prospered and sons-in-law went directly into slave trading. In the decade between 1751 and 1761, George Austin and Henry Laurens brought 61 slaving galleys carrying 8,000 people into their home port of Charleston. Laurens and Austin became two of the richest men in 18th-century America. When the war against the Northern states came to Charleston, the Ball sons fought to defend their property of land and people. Ball gives two contrasting records of the arrival of the

conquering Union troops. One is from Mary Ball, in the big master's house, wearing her jewels under three dresses for fear of theft and rape. The other view is from the slave cabins where one slave, Elsie, threw her hat skywards when "The Yankee said, 'You're free as a bird in the air'". After emancipation the lands were run as share-cropping ventures, but free labour was not as productive as a workforce which worked "black to black", from dark dawn to dark night. The Balls sank into the middle classes, sharing only a nostalgia for the great estates, and a belief that Ball slaves were neither beaten nor sexually exploited. Edward Ball has the courage to unveil this as a myth,



Ball with Caroline Smalls Goodson, a distant relative

and reveals the "step aside" families of Ball men: the children of black slaves from whom the white master will "step aside" and ignore. Some of these children Edward Ball traces to their present descendants while some have disappeared: "gone over" as their black cousins would say, into white society.

It is a matter of great regret that this remarkable piece of research is written in a style which is hopelessly muddled. Instead of a linear history of the family or the times, Ball chooses instead to narrate the history of his research. This produces some powerfully moving and personal vignettes — as when he and a slave's descendant stand together in a derelict slave graveyard which can only be identified by the regular sinkings of the ground — but permits the juxtaposition of the history of the Civil War with the author's visit as a young child to Washington DC: a complete irrelevance which compounds the suspicion that Edward Ball

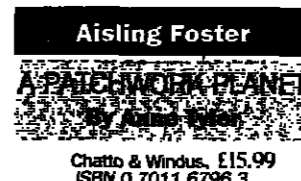
sees himself as the hero of his own history. Depending as he does on the Ball family papers, there is an inevitable bias towards the history of the masters. We have vivid descriptions of the Ball men's tendency to fatness, but the deaths of half of the slave children in the 18th century before they reach their 15th birthday is cited only briefly. The total number of Africans taken into slavery by the trade is a vexed question for historians. James Walvin suggests that 15 million would be a conservative estimate for the total, 50 million a possibility, and that 3 million were taken to the United States alone. Ball cites a total of 9.5 million enslaved, and 450,000 slaves imported to the United States, a staggering 700 per cent underestimate. Anyone with an interest in the hidden history of the enslaved will detect white bias throughout this book. But this is a thorough and

important piece of research. After he has rounded up all the Ball family members, and prepared family trees for Ball slaves, Edward Ball then traces his way back along the slave route: from America to Africa's Bunce Island. With all the power of an innocent abroad, he asks the African heirs of the slave traders direct questions as to whether they feel guilty for what they did to their own countrymen. Two heirs to slave traders answer no. But one slave-trade heir, Alkail Modu III, in Sierra Leone, tells Ball that the slave trade was "a long mistake, a long mistake by our ancestors. When we sit together we sometimes pray for those things which our ancestors have done 200, 300 years ago." It is to Edward Ball's credit that it is on this note that he closes his remarkable book.

Philippa Gregory's novel of the 18th-century slave trade, *A Respectable Trade*, was recently shown as a four-part drama on BBC 1.

Messy woman to the rescue

If this novel were a painting it could be called *Portrait of America*. Anne Tyler writes it like a great landscape artist. Far from the patchwork the title implies, her suburbs describe separateness and distance: her interiors mirror the souls of the people who live there; and the way they dress reveals subtle layers of class consciousness and states of mind.



Chatto & Windus, £15.99 ISBN 0 7011 6796 3

Barnaby Gardin shares that eye for detail. He is a 30-year-old divorcé with a fascination for other people's lives and a criminal record. He lives in a



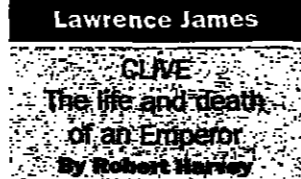
Anne Tyler: a true original

in their own peculiar houses and finding nothing odd about seeing a two-year-old child in "a miniature business suit". To Barnaby's status-driven mother, their success is next to godliness, causing Barnaby to wonder what goodness really means. "What makes some people more virtuous than others? ... Don't they ever feel that zingy, thrilling urge to smash the world to bits? Isn't it possible, maybe, that good people are just luckier people?" Yet the men of his family are unusually blessed. Ever since an unknown woman gave Great-grandfather Gaitlin the idea for inventing the lucrative Faithful Feminine Twinform, they believe every generation is visited by a personal angel who will set their world to rights. Even Barnaby's father was kept from assassination in the street by a stranger who asked him to light her cigarette. So when Barnaby meets the angelic, highly organised Sophia in her feather-patterned coat, he thinks she has been sent to save him.

Of course, Tyler aficionados may recognise a feisty little figure with barrettes in her hair at the corner of the frame. But Barnaby's love life is only one pattern in an intricate canvas. Like everyone else here, his aged clients are wonderfully realised, showing the long-term effects of suburban conformity. Some give in to urges of rudeness or violence. Others continue to keep everything nice, their frustration demonstrated by an old lady "tugging fretfully at her fingers as if she were pulling off gloves". As in real life and death, comedy and tragedy collide, but unlike the disappointingly "happy" ending to Tyler's last novel, there is no attempt to resolve such problems. Instead, attention to detail combine with brilliant chiaroscuro to produce a modern classic. The picture is so rich and original that it will be revisited again and again.

Hero past his sell-by date

The British distrust genius in their public men and are deeply jealous of spectacular success, the more so if it is achieved swiftly. For these reasons Robert Clive was reviled during his lifetime and has remained a controversial figure. He found his countrymen's hostility puzzling and wounding. Had he not been a brilliant commander of improvised armies, frustrated French ambitions in India and, by force of arms and sleight of hand, delivered the rich province of Bengal into the hands of the East India Company?



Hodder & Stoughton, £20 ISBN 0 340 65440 6

Later generations grudgingly acknowledged his achievements, but, like his contemporary traducers, they could not bring themselves to love the man who had laid the foundations of British India. Robert Hardy explains why in a dashing biography full of rich detail and sharp comment. Clive's early life progresses promisingly. Born in Shropshire in 1725, he joined the East India Company in 1743. A restless and sulky clerk, he turned a public emergency to his advantage when he discovered that he had the knack of inspiring Indian soldiers and leading them to victory. He returned to England with a wife, a pot of cash, and a hero's repu-

tion. This is how Roderick Random might have ended up had he joined the East India Company rather than the Royal Navy. But Clive returned to India where, according to Harvey, he underwent a journey into an inner, private "darkness" and succumbed to temptation. It happened like this: at the end of 1756 he was one of the commanders of an amphibious force which had been ordered to retake Calcutta, restore British prestige and chastise Siraj-ud-Daula, the Nawab of Bengal. Opportunities presented themselves which transformed Clive into a king-maker. Through forgery and lies he suborned enough of Siraj's adherents to make the Battle of Plassey a foregone conclusion. Siraj was subsequently murdered and the new Nawab doled out rewards to those who had helped him to

his throne, including Clive and his army. Clive had made the Company the powerbrokers in Bengal which, after unsuccessful experiments with puppet rulers, became a British province. So far, so good, and Clive again returned home, now super-rich and ready to accept the applause of his grateful countrymen. It was not as loud as he would have wished, but this did not dull the edge of his new ambition, which was to purchase a clutch of rotten boroughs and use the tame MPs to play factional politics, British style. His political career was interrupted by a crisis in Bengal, where he was sent as the only man able to cleanse its Government of corruption and re-establish the Company's authority. He failed in the former, succeeded in the latter: accompanied by elephants and a princely menagerie, including a tiger, Governor Clive cut a splendid figure, the very image of power as it was understood in India. It was an image which many in Britain thought odious. "Asiatic" ostentation went hand in hand with "Asiatic" despotism. Was he dragging Britain along that path which had been trodden by Rome, whose ancient liberties and vir-

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ALBANIA EXPOSED

Hoxha's bitter legacy

John and her cross

In January 1998, under the 70-year rule, the Public Record Office released government papers relating to the infamous obscenity trial of *The Well of Loneliness*.

In 1928, Radclyffe Hall's lesbian novel had been made the target of a hate campaign by *The Sunday Express*: "I would rather give a healthy boy or a healthy girl a phial of prussic acid than this novel," declared the Editor. The paper publicly urged the Home Secretary, Sir William Joynson-Hicks, to intervene and ban the book. It was the beginning of a drama that landed Radclyffe Hall and her publisher, Jonathan Cape, in court and ended with seized copies of the book being burnt in the King's furnace.

Or did it end there? Apart from ensuring that *The Well of Loneliness* would become the best known lesbian novel in the world, the episode seems to be causing as much embarrassment for the Government now as it did in 1928. When Diana Souhami went to the Public Record Office to inspect the newly released papers, she found that many of the files were empty. She made inquiries and was told that the material was "sensitive", that its release was "not in the public interest".

Ms Souhami protested. She wrote letters. She was told that the matter would be reviewed. It was reviewed and still the papers have been retained. It is another bizarre twist in the strange story of Marguerite Radclyffe Hall, better known as "John".

She was born in 1884 and raised by her neurotic mother with occasional visits from her playboy father — whose nickname was Rat. Rat left his daughter his good looks, charm, waywardness and money. At 18 she

Radclyffe Hall still unsettles society, Jeanette Winterson discovers

THE TRIALS OF RADCLYFFE HALL
By Diana Souhami
Weidenfeld & Nicholson, £20
ISBN 0 297 81825 2

inherited £100,000 (worth today about £5 million), and began to spend it on her passions: hunting, houses, travel and women.

Her first serious love affair was with an Edwardian beauty, Mabel Batten. Mrs Batten was beginning to age, but she was cultured and refined. She successfully deflected the squire image that Radclyffe Hall had been enjoying, and tried to teach her that poetry was better than horses. John liked the idea of being a poet and poured out a quantity of awful verse, but she was a young blood at heart and too much high-mindedness made her nervous. When she met Mabel's cousin, Una Troubridge, suddenly parties, picnics, dogs and sex seemed much more fun.

Una and John began an affair that became a partnership lasting 30 years. Neither cared much for the suffering caused to Mabel Batten or Una's husband, Admiral Troubridge. Troubridge was dumped. Mrs Batten died, and out of guilt Radclyffe Hall bought her a vault in Highgate Cemetery and began con-

sulting a medium in Maida Vale, who assured her well-paying clients that "Lady" was delighted for John and Una to be together.

The scenes were going so well that John and Una, when not breeding dachshunds or moving house, decided to present their findings to the Society for Psychological Research.

John was to be elected to the Society's council, when the president wrote a formal complaint charging Radclyffe Hall with stealing his friend Troubridge's wife and wrecking the admiral's home. He called her "a grossly immoral woman". Radclyffe Hall sued him for libel.

It might have been ordinary enough, but Sir John Fox-Pitt, now the defendant, was married to Edith Douglas; that is, his father-in-law was the Marquis of Queensberry, who had faced Oscar Wilde in much the same way.

This time, Radclyffe Hall won, and there were no laws for the Public Prosecutor to use to reopen the case himself. She had won but she had attracted the attention of some powerful enemies. The next time the courts got a chance at Radclyffe Hall, they would not let her escape.

Meanwhile, Una, like Mabel Batten, set about reinventing "her John". She corrected her spelling, omitted her wounded prose, got her a commercial publisher and an agent, and had her write novels. In 1926 *Adam's Breed* won the Prix Femina. It was a novel, like all her novels, resistant to innovation and with no trace of experiment. John and Una both thought Modernism a fad and were delighted that the prize judges and the reading public had proved them right. Radclyffe Hall was now famous as well as rich.

It was a deliberate decision to



Gone to the dogs: Una and John with their dachshunds in 1923

stake everything on *The Well of Loneliness*. She had a large readership and she was determined that those readers should come to understand homosexuality. It didn't occur to her that conservative types who didn't want to read Joyce or Woolf would hardly be sympathetic to new definitions of sexuality.

The trials broke her health and cost her her house in London. What follows is a sad waste of failed books and failed emotion. She fell desperately in love again with a Russian nurse, an ordinary woman who did not need John to be a hero, but the bitter triangle with Una lasted nine years and was not resolved when John died of cancer in 1943.

Diana Souhami's biography is fascinating and thorough. In style, substance, insight and wit it is by far the best thing anyone has written on the fateful life of Radclyffe Hall.

WILD NIGHTS

Vargas Llosa's latest

Tale of erotica in the hands of the master

Don Rigoberto is a hedonist, an erotomaniac and a man whose private life is ruled by the most exotic of fantasies. His dull working days, as an insurance executive, serve only to fund his love of art, literature and the pursuit of pleasure.

A Peruvian intellectual libertine, who records his thoughts, unsent letters and a raft of opposite ideas and quotations in a series of notebooks, Don Rigoberto is also feeling quite alone as Mario Vargas Llosa starts off a complicated, compelling new novel.

The Notebooks of Don Rigoberto, set in modern day Lima, is a classic Vargas Llosa tale of art and desire, as opposed to one of his more politically orientated pieces. It is the story of a love triangle entangling Rigoberto, his second wife Lucrecia, and Rigoberto's unassuming son Alfonso.

It is precocious Alfonso — a masculine Lolita, obsessed with the seamstress side of the life and the art of Egon Schiele — who is the reason for Rigoberto and Lucrecia's separation. Despite his schoolboy status, Alfonso has a handsome charm and a beguiling innocence with which he has seduced his stepmother, earning her an unhappy exile, across the city, from her husband.

As devious Alfonso works to reunite his father and his wife, Rigoberto drowns his sorrows by recounting a long line of erotic escapades that happen to his younger, more athletic wife.

There is an episode with cats, honey and smeared naked flesh; an encounter with Rigoberto's wife-swapping brother Narciso; an opportunistic trip to Paris and Vienna with a lover from long ago who sings to stop himself coming too soon; a steamy lesbian affair with the wife of an Algerian ambassador and a strange meeting with a eunuch motorcyclist who only wants to hear Lucrecia piss.

All are recorded with erotic skill, but for Rigoberto the constants throughout these sexual games are his own monogamy, pleasure and a deep love for his wife, Lucrecia. And until the very end of Vargas Llosa's novel, there is little distinction between what might be "truth" and what is imaginary — the whole fabric of the book is layered with uncertainty, blurring the line between reality and imagination.

With a constant stream of literary references, as well as woven excerpts from the notebooks themselves, there is a rich intertextual dimension to what is a highly self-referential book. One of its main pre-

Dominic Bradbury
THE NOTEBOOKS OF DON RIGOBERTO
By Mario Vargas Llosa
Translated by Edith Grossman
Faber, £15.99
ISBN 0 571 19309 9



Vargas Llosa: sophisticated

occupations is to do with the nature of fiction itself and the importance of imagination. The triptych of main characters are all busy escaping reality: Rigoberto and Lucrecia's relationship revolves around fantasy and Alfonso is increasingly convinced that somehow he is the reincarnation of Egon Schiele, acting out — with the help of his stepmother — scenes from his paintings.

Playing in the borderland between reality and dreams, without which their lives might be, at best, dull and, at worst, sordid, the three of them revel in "the beautiful lie of fiction", but also risk their relationships by losing themselves in their own dreams and desires. And Rigoberto, at least, finally realises that "dreams were a feeble lie, a fleeting deception that provided only temporary escape from frustration and solitude in order that we might better appreciate with more painful bitterness the beauty and substantiality of real life".

If there is a fault here, it is a touch of overstretching in what is — at heart — a fairly limited story, and one which returns to the existing characters of an earlier book, *La Praise of the Stepmother*. Yet *The Notebooks of Don Rigoberto* stands up well as a curious mix of eroticism, literary sophistication and dark comedy. Intricately constructed and beautifully conceived, it reaffirms Mario Vargas Llosa's reputation, alongside Gabriel Garcia Márquez, as one of South America's finest contemporary writers.

Republic of the damned

Justin Wintle
John Murray, £18.99
ISBN 0 7196 5459 4

In his 1974 book, *Pickaxe and Rifle*, which for a long time was about all there was on Albania, Bill Ash tried to do for Enver Hoxha what other Western dissidents had done for Ho Chi Minh. The Albanian revolution, he proposed, was a wondrous achievement by a small people always, historically, up against it. As for the Albanians themselves, "their steadfast dedication to the ideals of socialism have fully deserved the quality of life enjoyed in Albania today".

To read these sentiments now invites slapstick derision. While no two communisms have collapsed in identical fashion, what all ex-communisms teach us is that life under the deposed regimes was invariably more hateful than even the keenest of their external critics dare imagine.

Moreover, the legacy of such failure has, in more cases than not, been further failure, often of greater proportions than the parent catastrophe itself. Corruption, lawlessness and economic meltdown have proved the usual, and some times insoluble, concomitants of the Marxist denouement.

For the serious travel writer, wanting to distance himself from the "ordinary" tourist and carry up to what still seems the vital membrane of this century's history, these circumstances are a welcome if alarming boon.

How glorious, is it not, to be among the first "Westerners" to "witness" the cataclysm and/or its aftermath? To take the risk, and return, Graham Greene-wise, with a pallet of riveting copy?

Equipped with dollars, courage and formidable writing skills, Robert Carver undertook his version of the dangerous journey in the summer of 1960, when the allegedly democratic Government of Dr Sali Berisha was already fatally compromised.

What he discovered, as no one else has with quite the same determined despairing fervor, was an enclave nation composed of disparate loyalties (Muslim, Christian, Slavic, Greek, Vlach etc) that somehow combined all the worst features of North Korea, Bosnia Herzegovina and (for good measure) Haiti of the Duvaliers: a country bereft even of the pity of war.

The Accursed Mountains offers fresh horrors on every page, culled from either the immediate Hoxha past, or the Berisha present, until the two merge in a tapestry of near-bizarre complementary. Mur-



A country bereft of even the pity of war: colossal statue of Enver Hoxha, the dictator whose rule, long after his death, continues to oppress Albania

der and rape are always in the air, sometimes joining forces, as in the case of the wretched Bulgarian diplomat ceremoniously sodomised before his dispatch — a time-honoured Albanian custom, we are told.

Making his way from an entry point on the Greek border in the southwest to the inhospitable mountains of the north, Carver develops an eminently pragmatic aversion

for both the places and the people he encounters; for truly, if his journal is to be believed at all, he has stumbled into, and cannot stumble out of, the Republic of the Damned, Europe's very own Cambodia, no less.

At first it appears to Carver that the Albanians have no backbone, moral or otherwise. But gradually it becomes clear to him that an entire machinery of desuetude is and always has been in place. Forget about communism, forget about democracy. What makes a mockery of any politics in Albania, and probably any religion, is an archaic adherence to clan-based blood-feudism: an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and if you happen not to belong to any clan then so much the worse.

Does Carver overstate his

destination is all he sees. Yet the following year the Berisha regime crumpled on the back of the "pyramid" scandal. Huge numbers of Albanians discovered how unwisely they had invested their savings.

Savings? What savings? Yet such is its suasion, it is unimaginable that anyone who reads Carver's book will wish to put such scepticism to the test.

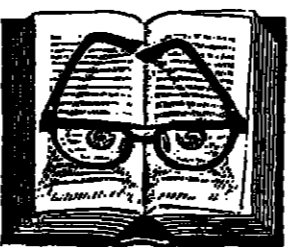
make the dustjacket 39 times more valuable than the book is to make a fetish of incidentals. What exactly doth it profit a man to have the exorbitantly rare jacket to some 1890s title when it consists merely of a piece of unprinted grey paper? And how long will people go on paying enormous premiums for rare wrappers without reference to their intrinsic importance?

Different generations of bibliophiles have different priorities, as John Carver demonstrated in *Taste and Technique in Book-Collecting*. Writing at the end of the 1940s, he noticed a relaxing of the insistence that old books should contain the "material marginal to completeness", such as the blank leaves and

the publisher's advertisements that are "called for" by bibliographers.

More recently, in the 1980s, proof copies of contemporary fiction were fashionable, because they were thought to be scarce and to give evidence about the process of composition. With some exceptions, that enthusiasm evaporated when it turned out that proofs were often widely circulated.

Back in 1948 Carver wrote that "only the lunatic fringe pushed the pursuit of 'mint' condition to the point where dust-jackets were considered a matter of serious concern". That may sound quaint now, but Carver knew a thing or two about collecting books.



BIBLIOMANE

Paper torches for those with money to burn

THE book collector's three criteria these days are condition, condition and condition. A copy of *Don Juan* or *Emma* in the original ugly paper boards is worth much more than one in a beautiful period leather binding. The vindication for this is that the book has not been "sophisticated" — mucked about with — and so, being in the state in which it left the printer, tells more of its history.

But this is to forget that books were made to be bound, either by the bookseller or by the purchaser, so one that wasn't is a freak. It is also to overlook the pleasure and historical insight to be derived from bindings and other aspects of ownership history such as bookplates, annotation and Grangerising (the addition of extra plates).

Yes, a mint copy of the earliest appearance of a book can be thrilling, but today's premiums can be absurd. This was brought home to me by some T. S. Eliot rarities at the Antiquarian Booksellers Association's fair at Olympia. A copy of *Pryorock* which could legitimately be described as perfect was priced at £17,500. But since this fragile pamphlet would be damaged by handling, no buyer will ever read it. This makes it something less than a book, like those literary virgins that are valued because their pages have never been cut open.

Another dealer had two copies of the first American printing of *The Waste Land*,

one from early in the run, one from later. There are tiny differences between the two states and the earlier and slightly brighter copy also had its dustwrapper. One was priced at £20,000, the other at £500. This discrepancy shows how frivolous this realm of collecting has become. To

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BRITISH ISLES

ENJOY the Lake District before the summer hordes arrive and even save money with Countrywide, which is offering six nights' dinner, bed and breakfast from July 12 for £192, a £30 discount. Picnic lunches are included in the package for when you set out across the fells or along the coast. Details: 0161 4462226.

TALL SHIPS gather in Falmouth this month for their race, which is just one of many maritime and watersports events in Cornwall. Although it is the high season, Country Holidays still has properties available in the county for a week from July 11. For example, a converted barn sleeping

four costs £346. Details: 01282 445095.

CRUISE around the Norfolk Broads and make sure you catch the July 15 race meeting at Great Yarmouth. That is the unlikely but enticing holiday combination proposed by Blakes Boating Holidays, which is offering four nights aboard a cruiser sleeping six from July 13 for £366. Details: 01603 782911.

IRISH FERRIES' five-day special £119 return fare on the Holyhead-Dublin route remains in operation for another fortnight, so don't miss out. Details: 0990 170000.

AMERSHAM in Buckinghamshire is a pleasing mixture of modern and old England, and The Crown, which has featured in many typically English films, is offering three nights for the price of two until mid-July, bringing the cost of dinner, bed and breakfast down to £65 a person a night. Details: 01494 721541.

BRIGHTON'S Queens Hotel, where half-board is available for £40.40 a day, is among several hotels with midsummer reductions currently on offer from Superbreak. Details: 0161 238527.

EUROPE

THE STRENGTH of the pound and a lack of punters in the fortnight before the peak season starts has led to a flood of holiday bargains in Greece and Turkey, with many deals available for under £200. Tony Dowe writes.

Allegro Holidays is offering a week's B&B on Turkey's Turquoise Coast for £179, with a flight from Manchester on July 13. A similar trip with Treasures of Turkey on July 10 costs a little more but there are discounts for children and a Gatwick flight option. A week's Airtours self-catering holiday in Turkey, flying from Manchester on Sunday, costs £229 from Co-op Travelcare.

Kosmar will take you to Crete on Tuesday for a week's self-catering for £199, while Sunvil offers a week on Zakynthos from July 9 for £219. Details: Allegro, 01625 520777; Treasures, 0171-494 2292; Co-op, 0541 500388; Kosmar, 0181-3686833; Sunvil, 0181-568 4499.

A WORLD CUP for players of all ages over 10 is being staged in Haarlem, Holland, two weeks after the main event and Sports Tours is eager to take teams across the Channel to compete. A week's break

from July 25 at a holiday park on the coast costs from £159, including coach travel and transfers to the matches. Details: 01708 344001.

PARIS breaks at special prices are available as soon as the World Cup ends from Crystal Premier Cities, with three nights' B&B in a three-star hotel costing from £169, including Eurostar travel from July 13. Details: 0181-241 5040.

CAMPING in Brittany in a four-bedroom superpent for eight nights from July 12 will cost a family of two adults and up to four children from £341, including ferry crossings, with Advantage Travel Centres. Details: 0870 9090070.

MALTA for a week's half-board in Bugibba is available for £274 from Malta Direct Travel, with a flight from Gatwick on July 13. Details: 0181-785 3233.

LAKESIDE holidays in Italy are available at a discount from Lakes & Mountains Holidays, with a week in an apartment in Baveno beside Lake Maggiore costing £220 a person this month and £233 in August, including Channel ferry crossing for car and passengers. Details: 01329 844405.



Follow in the Clintons' footsteps on a tour to China

LONG HAIL

CANADIAN tours by coach starting on Sunday are still available from Jessave. Fly from Heathrow, Manchester or Glasgow and either travel right across the country or concentrate on the cities, the Rockies and Niagara Falls. Prices start from £1,375 and include all travel, excursions and 13 nights' accommodation. Details: 01342 327711.

SAIL the South Pacific aboard a square rigger this summer with Explore Worldwide and you can even save some money. An 11-day voyage in the New Hebrides now costs from £950 and there is a professional crew, so you can do as much or as little work as you like. Flights extra. Details: 01252 34461.

THE JERASH Festival of music, drama and dance in Jordan from July 22 to August 7 can be enjoyed on short breaks with Royal Holidays. They cost from £473 with return flights, three nights' half-board and sightseeing tours. Details: 01353 777950.

JOHANNESBURG for £404 return is available this month from The Travel Bug

with flights on Emirates. Details: 0990 737747.

FOLLOW Bill Clinton to China with Bales Worldwide, leaving from Heathrow on August 23, and you will probably see more and definitely be spared the diplomacy. The nine-day trip costs from £598 and includes visits to the Forbidden City, the Great Wall and Beijing. Details: 01306 885991.

A PERSONAL caddie is included in the Golfing Magic package available at the five-star Le Meridien Nirwana resort in Bali, which also offers a night's accommodation and a round of golf for £60. Non-golfing partners pay only £28 a night. Plenty of bargain flights are still available. Details: 0345 404040.

All prices are per person and based on two sharing a room, unless otherwise stated.

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European Law Report

Pregnancy related dismissal unlawful

Brown v Rentokil Ltd Case C-394/96

Before C. Gulmann, acting as President, and Judges H. Ragnemalm, M. Wahler, R. Schintgen, G. F. Mancini, P. J. G. Kapteyn, J. L. Murray, D. A. O. Edward, J.-P. Puissochet, P. Jann and L. Sevón. Advocate General D. Ruiz-Jarabo Colomer. (Opinion February 5) (Judgment June 20)

An industrial tribunal dismissed the applicant's application under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and on her appeal from the dismissal of her appeal to the Employment Appeal Tribunal, the Court of Session concluded that since in Case C-179/88 Handeyskov Konnerfunktionærenes Forbund i Danmark v Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening (Hertz) [The Times December 20, 1990], [1992] ICR 333, [1990] ECR I-3579, the Court of Justice had drawn a clear distinction between pregnancy and illness attributable to pregnancy, the applicant, whose absence was due to illness and who had been dismissed on that account, could not succeed.

means that men and women shall be guaranteed the same conditions without discrimination on grounds of sex. In its judgment the European Court of Justice held: The dismissal of a female worker on account of pregnancy or on account of illness attributable to pregnancy could affect only women and therefore constituted direct discrimination on the ground of sex: see, inter alia, Hertz (paragraph 13) and Case C-32/93 Webb v EMO Air Cargo (UK) Ltd [The Times July 15, 1994], [1994] ICR 770, [1994] ECR I-3567, paragraph 19. It was in view of the harmful effects which the risk of dismissal could have on the physical and mental state of women who were pregnant, had recently given birth or were breastfeeding, that article 10 of Council Directive 92/85/EEC of October 19, 1992 (OJ 1992 L248, p1) prohibited dismissal during the period from the beginning of maternity leave to the end of maternity leave, save in exceptional cases not connected with the woman's condition: see Webb (paras 21-22). That was the general context for answering the first question, which concerned Directive 76/207. The cause of the applicant's dismissal lay in the fact that she was ill during her pregnancy to such an extent that she was unfit for work for 26 weeks, and it was common ground that her illness was attributable to her pregnancy. However, dismissal of a woman during pregnancy could not be based on her inability, as a result of her condition, to perform her contractual duties, as if such an interpretation were adopted, the protection afforded by Community law to a woman during pregnancy would be available only to pregnant women who were able to

comply with the conditions of their employment contracts, with the result that Directive 76/207 would be rendered ineffective. In Hertz (paragraph 15) the Court had held that, during the maternity leave accorded to her under national law, a woman was protected against dismissal on the ground of her absence. Pregnancy was not comparable to a pathological condition, but the fact remained that it was a period during which there could arise disorders and complications which were a specific feature of pregnancy and could cause incapacity for work, so that dismissal during pregnancy for absence due to such incapacity must be regarded as essentially based on the fact of pregnancy. Accordingly, the principle of non-discrimination required that, throughout the period of pregnancy, a woman be afforded protection similar to that to which she was held entitled in Hertz. However, where pathological conditions caused by pregnancy or childbirth arose after the end of maternity leave, they were covered by the general rules applicable in the event of illness, and in such a case the sole question was whether female and male workers' absences caused by incapacity for work were treated in the same way, if they were, there was no discrimination. It was clear from those considerations that, contrary to the court's ruling in Case C-400/95 Larsson v Faer Supermarket [1997] ECR I-3757, paragraph 23, where a woman was absent owing to an illness, resulting from pregnancy or childbirth, which arose during pregnancy and persisted during and after maternity leave, her absence not only during mater-

nity leave, but also in the period from the start of pregnancy to the end of maternity leave, could not be taken into account for comparison with the period justifying her dismissal under national law. Discrimination involved the application of different rules to comparable situations or the application of the same rule to different situations. Where a contractual term enabling dismissal of workers of either sex after a period of continuous absence was relied on to dismiss a pregnant worker who was absent because of a pregnancy-related disorder, the term was applied in the same way to different situations as for workers already given, the situation of a pregnant worker who was unfit for work as a result of disorders associated with pregnancy could not be considered the same as that of a male worker and absent through incapacity for work for the same length of time. Application of such a term in circumstances such as those of the case therefore constituted direct sex discrimination. On those grounds the Court ruled that the questions referred would be answered: Articles 2(1) and 5(1) of Directive 76/207 precluded dismissal of a female worker at any time during her pregnancy for absence due to incapacity for work caused by illness resulting from that pregnancy. The fact that a female worker had been dismissed during her pregnancy on the basis of a contractual term providing for the employer could dismiss employees of either sex after a stipulated number of weeks of continuous absence did not affect that answer.

UK attendance allowance not payable in France

Partridge v Adjudication Officer Case C-287/96

Before C. Gulmann, President of Chamber and Judges J. C. Moitinho de Almeida and J.-P. Puissochet. Advocate General P. Léger. (Opinion March 5) (Judgment June 11)

No 2001/83 of June 2, 1983 (OJ 1983 L230, p9), as amended by Council Regulation (EEC) No 2471/92 of April 30, 1992 (OJ 1992 L136, p1). Article 4(2a) provides: "This regulation shall apply to [certain] special non-contributory benefits." Article 10a provides: "Notwithstanding the provisions of article 10 persons to whom this regulation applies shall be granted the special non-contributory cash benefits referred to in article 4(2a) exclusively in the territory of the member state in which they reside, in accordance with the legislation of that state, provided that such benefits are listed in Annex IIa." Attendance allowance was listed in section 14(b) of Annex IIa. In its judgment the Third Chamber of the Court of Justice held: Article 10 of Regulation 1408/71 provided that, except as otherwise provided in the regulation, certain benefits, including invalidity benefits, acquired under the legislation of one member state, were not to be subject to withdrawal by reason of the recipient's residence in another state. The different rule, in article 10a, was inserted into the regulation by Regulation 1247/92, which entered into force on June 1, 1992. Article 4(2a) was also added by the latter regulation. By parity of reasoning with the judgment in Snares v Adjudication Officer (The Times December 10, 1997), [1997] ECR I-6057, which was concerned with disability living allowance, attendance allowance, being listed in Annex IIa, was a special non-contributory benefit within article 4(2a) and was governed by the co-ordination rules of article 10a. The primary reason was that the reference in Annex IIa to legislation such as that relating to attendance allowance was to be accepted as establishing that benefits granted pursuant to that

legislation were special non-contributory benefits falling within article 10a, and that the wording of article 10a implied that the benefits to which it referred also came within article 4(2a). Moreover, the fact that the United Kingdom had not made a declaration under article 5, as amended, in so far as it provided that the member states were to specify the special non-contributory benefits covered by article 4(2a), did not preclude attendance allowance from being classified as a special non-contributory benefit. Attendance allowance came under either the scheme established by article 10 or that introduced by article 10a, depending on the point in time at which the disability arose. Since the applicant's entitlement to attendance allowance arose after June 1, 1992, when Regulation 1247/92 entered into force, she could not rely on the transitional provisions in that regulation to the effect that the regulation did not affect the maintenance of the rights of persons who, before the regulation entered into force, were already entitled to the benefit or satisfied the conditions for entitlement. On those and further grounds the Court ruled: On a proper construction of article 10a of Regulation 1408/71 as amended, read in conjunction with Annex IIa, attendance allowance fell within the scope of that provision and was therefore a special non-contributory benefit within the meaning of article 4(2a), with the result that the position of a person such as Partridge, who satisfied the conditions for the award of that benefit after June 1, 1992, when Regulation 1247/92 entered into force, was governed exclusively by the system of co-ordination established by article 10a.

No VAT on unlawful gaming if licensed casinos exempt

Fischer v Finanzamt Donaueschingen Case C-283/95

Before H. Ragnemalm, President of Chamber and Judges G. F. Mancini, P. J. G. Kapteyn, J. L. Murray and G. Hirsch. Advocate General F. G. Jacobs. (Opinion March 20) (Judgment June 11)

using a machine, but departed from the terms of the permit to the extent that the game resembled roulette as played in duly licensed public casinos. The defendant tax office took the view that the plaintiff supplied services subject to VAT and accordingly made an assessment which the plaintiff brought proceedings to contest. The Finanzgericht referred, inter alia, the questions whether the unlawful operation of a game of chance fell within the scope of Sixth Council Directive 77/388/EEC of May 17, 1977 on the harmonisation of the laws of the member states relating to turnover taxes: common system of value-added tax; uniform basis of assessment (OJ 1977 L145, p1), and whether a member state could impose VAT on that activity when the corresponding activity carried on by a licensed public casino was exempted. Article 13(B) of the Sixth Directive provides: "Member states shall exempt... (f) betting, lotteries and other forms of gambling, subject to conditions and

limitations laid down by each member state." In its judgment, the Sixth Chamber of the Court of Justice held: The Sixth Directive expressly referred to forms of gambling in article 13(B)(f) and in article 33 which provided that the directive "shall not prevent a member state from maintaining or introducing taxes on betting and gambling." It was thus clear that such transactions did not, as such, fall outside the Sixth Directive. However, the national court expressed doubts as to the possibility of imposing VAT on unlawful activities. The European Court had held that illegal imports or supplies of narcotic drugs or counterfeit currency, whose release into the economic and commercial channels of the Community was by definition precluded and which could give rise only to penalties under the criminal law, were wholly alien to the provisions of the Sixth Directive and did not give rise to any VAT debt. That principle related only to

products which, because of their special characteristics, could not be marketed or incorporated into economic channels. By contrast, outside those cases where all competition between a lawful and unlawful economic sector was ruled out, the principle of fiscal neutrality inherent in the common system of VAT precluded a generalised distinction from being drawn in the levying of VAT between lawful and unlawful transactions. Those considerations, relating to the import or supply of goods, applied equally to the supply of services such as the organisation of games of chance. Such games, and roulette in particular, were lawfully played in a number of member states, and since the unlawful transactions at issue were in competition with lawful activities, the principle of fiscal neutrality precluded their being treated differently as regards VAT. The unlawful operation of games of chance therefore fell within the Sixth Directive.

The United Kingdom Government maintained that, in laying down, under article 13(B)(f), conditions and limitations of the exemptions provided for by article 13(B), the member states were entitled to require that the transactions in question took place in duly licensed casinos. The principle of fiscal neutrality also applied when the member states exercised their power to lay down conditions and limitations, and since that principle precluded a generalised distinction from being drawn in the levying of VAT between lawful and unlawful transactions, it followed that member states could not reserve the exemption solely to lawful games of chance. On those grounds the Court ruled: The unlawful operation of a game of chance, in the present case, fell within the scope of the Sixth Directive. Article 13(B)(f) was to be interpreted as meaning that a member state could not impose VAT on that activity when the corresponding activity carried on by a licensed public casino was exempted.

Deducting VAT on transport which is tool of the trade

Commission of the European Communities v French Republic (supported by United Kingdom, interveners) Case C-43/96

Before R. Schintgen, President of Chamber and Judges G. F. Mancini, P. J. G. Kapteyn, J. L. Murray and G. Hirsch. Advocate General F. G. Jacobs. (Opinion September 25, 1997) (Judgment June 18)

The Sixth Chamber of the Court of Justice of the European Communities so held when dismissing an application by the Commission of the European Communities under article 169 of the EC Treaty for a declaration that, by maintaining in force legislation which denied that right to taxable persons, the French Republic had failed to fulfil its obligations under Sixth Council Directive 77/388/EEC of May 17, 1977 on the harmonisation of the laws of the member states relating to turnover taxes: common system of value added tax; uniform basis of assessment (OJ 1977 L145, p1), and in particular article 17(2). Article 17 provides: "(2) In so far as the goods and services are used for the purposes of his taxable transactions, the taxable person shall be entitled to deduct from the tax which he is liable to pay: (a) value added tax due or paid in respect of goods or services supplied to him by another taxable person. (b) The Council shall decide what expenditure shall not be eligible for a deduction of value added tax. Value added tax shall in no circumstances be deductible on expenditure which is not strictly business expenditure, such as that on luxuries, amusements or entertainment. Until the above rules come into force, member states may retain all the exclusions provided for under their national laws when this Directive comes into force." In its judgment, the Sixth Chamber of the Court of Justice held: The French rule at issue, which entered into force on July 2, 1967, provided: "Value added tax shall not be deductible on vehicles or machines, whatever their nature, designed for the transport of persons or for mixed use." By a letter of 1991 the Commission informed the French Republic that it regarded that rule as incompatible with article 17(2) of the Sixth Directive in so far as it did not confer the right to deduct VAT on vehicles used for driving instruction. The French Government subsequently retained the application of the rule to vehicles used in driving schools, but the Commission took the view that the

principle of the right to deduct VAT on means of transport which constituted the very object of an application by the Commission, fundamental, and so brought the present action. According to the Commission, the exclusion of the right to deduct provided for by article 17(2) related only to expenditure which was not strictly business expenditure, the aim being to prevent a taxable person from being able to obtain for his own final use goods and services which had not been taxed. That interpretation could not be accepted, as it was not consistent with the wording of article 17(2). It followed in particular from the second sentence that the rules which the Council was called on to adopt were not automatically limited to expenditure which was not strictly business expenditure. In those circumstances the expression "all the exclusions" in the third sentence clearly included expenditure which was strictly business expenditure. That provision accordingly authorised the member states to retain national rules which denied the taxable person the right to deduct VAT on means of transport which constituted the very tool of their trade. That interpretation was confirmed by the origin of article 17(2). In the explanatory memorandum accompanying the draft of the Sixth Directive (Bulletin of the European Communities, Supplement 11/73 p1), the Commission stated that certain expenditure, even though incurred in the ordinary course of the undertaking's business, would be difficult to apportion between business and private use. Further, it was clear from a comparison of the wording of article 17(2) proposed by the Commission and that adopted by the Council that, when the directive was adopted, the member states were unable to agree on arrangements applicable specifically to expenditure on passenger transport. On those grounds the Court dismissed the application and ordered the Commission to pay the costs and the United Kingdom to bear its own costs.

Irish job-share pay conversion unlawful

Hill and Another v Revenue Commissioners and Another Case C-243/95

National legislation under which, when job-sharing workers, the great majority of whom were women, converted to full-time work, their situation was automatically reviewed in respect of their placement, on the full-time pay scale, at a level lower than that which they had occupied on the scale applicable to job-sharing, was precluded by article 119 of the Treaty and Council Directive 75/117/EEC of February 10, 1975 on the approximation of the laws of the member states relating to the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women (OJ 1975 L45, p14). The Sixth Chamber of the Court of Justice of the European Communities so held on July 17, on giving a preliminary ruling under article 177 of the EC Treaty on a reference by the Labour Court, Ireland, in proceedings between the applicants, Kathleen Hill and Ann Stapleton, and the Revenue Commissioners and the Department of Finance. In its judgment the European Court of Justice said, inter alia, that when workers, such as the applicant clerical assistants in the

civil service, converted from job-sharing, under which they had worked for 30 per cent of full time, receiving 30 per cent of the salary corresponding to that point on the pay scale for full-time work, to full-time working, they should, unless a difference in treatment could be justified, expect both their hours of work and the level of pay to increase by 30 per cent, as the work they had done in job-sharing was the same as that done by their full-time colleagues and they were otherwise in a comparable situation to them. However, under the system introduced in Ireland, in 1984 concerning 30 per cent of the salary corresponding to that point on the pay scale for full-time work, such progression, and such workers, on converting to full-time work, were placed at a lower level than that to be expected. They were paid less than double what they would have earned had they been job-sharing, and consequently their hourly rate of pay was reduced. Since 92.2 per cent of clerical assistants who job-shared, and 98 per cent of all civil servants who did so, were women, the system involved indirect discrimination of female workers vis-à-vis male ones, for which no objective justification had been shown.

Advertisement for 'For your company golf day' featuring 'it's the business' slogan, '4 steps to La Manga...', and a registration form for the Times MeePierston Corporate Golf Challenge. The form includes fields for company name, address, telephone, and a section for personalized newsletter requirements. It also mentions a full set of rules and a registration fee of £175 plus VAT.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

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Pitch not to blame as 23 wickets fall

DERBY (first day of four: Derbyshire won toss; Derbyshire with seven second-innings wickets in hand, are 117 runs ahead of Essex)

FEW teams are dismissed for 70 and achieve a first-innings lead, but Derbyshire did precisely that yesterday as a series of batsmen failed dismally to cope with swing and seam on a blameless pitch. It was stranger than fiction as both innings, consecutively the lowest in first-class cricket this summer, were completed by tea.

Even amid the tumbling wickets, Barnett, a Derbyshire player for 20 years, achieved the career landmark of 25,000 first-class runs when reaching 17 in the second innings with a boundary through extra cover off Irani.

Regulations demand that Lord's must be informed when 15 or more wickets fall in a day but the umpires, David Shepherd and Ray Julian, confirmed that there was nothing untoward in the surface. The ball kept low occasionally and notably when Slater. Derbyshire's Australian batsman and acting captain, was out for the second time in six hours.

Slater was leg-before to Iltis, who thus added another notable wicket to his first-innings return of six for 20. After ten championship innings, Slater has still failed to aggregate 200 runs and has the unusual and unwanted record of being a specialist overseas batsman without a championship half-century by the beginning of July.

Iltis, at 27, is in his eleventh season with Essex and has benefited from a winter of energy conservation while working for a City firm. Cowan, his new-ball partner, having also been lightly employed by England on tour in West Indies, took three for 18 as Derbyshire tumbled to 29 for seven before a mini-revival, featuring Roberts, guided them beyond 40, their lowest post-war score, against Glamorgan at Cardiff in 1946.



Singh, the Cambridge University captain, strikes an off-drive on his way to scoring 117 at Lord's yesterday

LORD'S (first day of three: Oxford won toss; Oxford University, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 205 runs behind Cambridge University)

ANURAG SINGH may have his critics in terms of certain eccentricities displayed as captain, but there can be no doubting his abilities as a batsman. Yesterday, despite having been limited to only three previous first-class innings this season, he looked near the peak of his form in taking 117 off the Oxford attack.

His innings lasted 34 hours and formed the cornerstone of Cambridge's adequate response to being put in on a good wicket against a steady attack. Singh's chanceless innings included

Singh tunes up with stylish run

med, who made a cameo 30, and it was herabout that you grow to appreciate Mather's scattering technique, in which line and length were unpredictable.

Turner puts Sussex under the hammer

HOVE (first day of four: Somerset won toss; Sussex, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 307 runs behind Somerset)

THE sight of the players leaving the field for tea was the signal for most of the batsmen to try for a cuppa but to go home. Hardly surprising since the time was ten minutes to six and the exodus was not matched by a flurry of turnstile activity in the opposite direction.

The original start time for this match was 1pm but, after a less than enthusiastic response from their membership to the luncheon kick-off for their last home match, against Warwickshire, Sussex

duly brought it forward by half an hour. James Kirtley, 23, the promising Sussex seam bowler, was awarded his county cap before play and, as if to justify the accolade, took two of the first three wickets to fall, removing Harden's off stump and then bowling Holloway.

There was some movement early on but nothing too drastic. Lewry, though, had Parsons caught behind for one, leaving Somerset at 46 for four.

Lara shows signs of a return to fluent self

AFTER a run of low scores, it seemed that this was the tonic that Brian Lara required. Different circumstances motivate different batsmen but a slump in form concentrates the mind. Given a stage, a little extra glitz, the floodlights and a sizeable crowd, Lara rediscovered a semblance of form with an 86-ball innings of 60. But Warwickshire could not sustain their charge.

Having won the toss and elected to bat in the day-night Lancashire game against Lancashire at Edgworth, it was a slight surprise that, with Nick Knight on England duty, Lara did not open. By the third over, though, the West Indies captain was in action as Mohamed Sheikh edged Peter Martin to stand in wicketkeeper John Crawley. Gone was the expansive backswing, replaced by a focused determination borne out of an Axa League average still shy of 25.

It was hardly vintage Lara, but it was an innings interspersed with quality strokes. He outscored Neil Smith, his pinch-hitting partner, during a stand of 101 in 24 overs. Just as they sought to accelerate, and the Trinidadian's fluency returned, both fell in a two-over spell.

Smith, attempting a quick single, was run out by good work from Mike Watkinson and Lara, shackled by the two off-spinners bowling in tandem, lofted Gary Yates to long on.

Floodlights are proving a successful venture for Warwickshire. They have the local populace and they hold the Axa League title — than most counties. A crowd in the region of 10,000 was in attendance last night.

In bowling his eight overs for 26 runs and dismissing Lara, Yates undermined Warwickshire's charge for a demanding total. Boundaries were at a premium, leaving Lancashire 44 runs an over to take a four-point lead at the top of the table.

Table with 2 columns: Team Name and Score. Includes sections for Lancashire, Warwickshire, Kent, and other teams.

Table with 2 columns: Team Name and Score. Includes sections for Essex, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire, and other teams.

Table with 2 columns: Team Name and Score. Includes sections for Somerset, Gloucestershire, and other teams.

Nicholas in the mood to thwart Lopez bid

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES IN KOHLER, WISCONSIN

IF Nancy Lopez is not the 53rd US Women's Open champion come Sunday, at her 22nd attempt, it will not be for want of preparation, confidence or skill, but because someone has played out of her skin.

That someone could be Alison Nicholas, MBE, who arrived at Blackwolf Run as the defending champion. Nicholas has had a disrupted season. She has been helping to stabilise the European tour and was laid low by a chest infection in May that led to problems with her left lung. It was so bad that she had to pull out of the McDonald's LPGA championship, the second major of the women's season, and her game has suffered.

Last week, in New Jersey, Nicholas said she was "a bit like the Ramon" in spraying the ball everywhere, but the fairways? On the practice ground here, she realised she was not turning properly and is now hitting the ball 20 yards farther, thanks to some advice from a person who is not Lawrence Farmer, her coach. When he hears, Farmer, far from being affronted, will be delighted.

On Tuesday, Nicholas tested the soundness of her chest in the icy air-conditioning of the press room by cheering on England against Argentina. Relaxed and confident, she now has her own website and a new logo, which uses the o's in her name to depict a ball toppling into a hole.

Westwood's challenge gets off to rough start

FROM JOHN HOPKINS GOLF CORRESPONDENT AT DRUID'S GLEN

TODAY is the first day of the most exciting three weeks of professional golf in Europe. Colin Montgomerie calls the next 21 days the heart of his year. The Irish Open, with three of the world's ten best players competing for a first prize of nearly £200,000, begins at Druid's Glen, south of Dublin, this morning.

Many of the same competitors then move to Scotland for the Loch Lomond world invitationals, which begins on Wednesday, before they drive or fly south to the Lancashire coast, where the Open Championship at Royal Birkdale gets under way two weeks from today. It is a mouth-watering prospect.

A Druid's Glen last year, Lee Westwood's 54-hole two-stroke lead after 54 holes only to be swept aside by Montgomerie, who played one of the remarkable rounds of the year, a nine-under-par 62 that gave him victory by seven strokes. Montgomerie has described it as his best round in Europe.

It will be difficult for him to repeat that feat, for the rough has been grown longer and the course narrowed and stretched to a touch more than 7,000 yards, about 200 yards more than last year. "The course is playing 1% to two strokes harder than it was last year," says Montgomerie. For some, it was too difficult. Westwood, in his first tournament since the US Open and being named one of the world's top ten golfers, took either 79 or 81 in the pro-am yesterday, depending on who you believe. Montgomerie, on the other hand, was five under par after 11 holes and finished with a 69, two under par.

FOR THE RECORD

Table with multiple columns listing various sports events, dates, and locations. Includes sections for Badminton, Bowls, Cricket, Football, and other sports.

Table with multiple columns listing various sports events, dates, and locations. Includes sections for Football, Golf, and other sports.

Henman displays merciless streak

SIMON BARNES



At Wimbledon

I think it is fair to say that if Tim Henman had been in David Beckham's position on Tuesday night, he would not have kicked his man. On the evidence of his performance yesterday, he would have pulled a knife and stabbed him to death.

For this was a savage performance. Henman took on Petr Korda and, in three brief sets, utterly destroyed him. No temperamental lashing out: this was a cold, careful assassination. I have watched Henman play many times; I have never seen him play three utterly merciless sets.

There was not an ounce of ruth about Henman yesterday. He goes into the semi-finals after a match of carefully thought-out, carefully acted-out tennis in which there was not a scruple of mercy. This from a man who is said to have a concentration problem.

Korda was supposed to be struggling with an ankle injury, and from the start it was clear that Korda was moving oddly. But the thing about Korda is that he always moves

oddly. He is a very odd fellow altogether, and he moves like a very well made clockwork toy. But he can play tennis all right, won the Australian Open this year and is the No 3 seed here at Wimbledon. A very serious opponent, and a serious psychological barrier as well. Henman has never made the semis: in the first two years of Henmania, he was knocked out in the quarters. And both times he has been played off the court, losing in straight sets and not once, in either match, breaking service.

But he knew that Korda was carrying an injury, and it was clear that he was not moving to the ball with any fluency. Rhythm deserted him on his service. From the first game it was clear that Korda was beatable; the point is that Henman did not beat him. He hammered him.

It was a performance of stunning confidence, startling certainty. The famous Henman Centre Court victories are normally played in quite a different mood. Henman takes us to an emo-

work up a strange symbiosis in which anxiety and excellence feed on each other's increase.

But not yesterday, that was the point. Yesterday was not an emotional occasion: not by the standards set by the standards of the Centre Court/Tim Henman combination. It was almost a cerebral match. Henman hardly so much as clenched a fist: there was not even a trace of the little skip of self-delight.

Korda was not exactly limping, but if he were a horse — he looks a little like a horse, though not one you'd pay serious money for — he would not have passed the vet. Basically, he was down to ten men from the whistle and Henman was able to let his superior numbers prevail.

He manipulated Korda from one side of the court to the other, kept up a good pace and cadence throughout the game, and never allowed Korda a rest if he could help it. He chucked in the odd drop shot, too, a murderous tactic against a man with impaired mobility.

There was nothing at all unsporting about any of this: there was nothing remotely generous in it, either. That is sport for you. Courtesy is expected: generosity is not.

At Wimbledon, it has been the custom for years to talk about the Brits who were "too nice" to win. It is complete and correct nonsense. Henman can play the Nice Boy to perfection: he is courteous, sometimes even amusing. He doesn't go about boasting about the number of championships he is about to win; he doesn't spend time slugging his fellow players. Well, Greg Rusedski, maybe, but that is a relationship that would try anybody, no matter how nice.

But beneath his pleasant manners there is a man who can become crazed with ambition, and who on yesterday's performance is utterly without remorse.

"I was pretty clinical," he said afterwards. "I never let him back into it." He denied that he had built a strategy around the injury: "I'd be a fool to change my game-plan." He went on, with utter predict-

ability, about being "focused", but for once, that wretched bit of sport-babble is spot on. Henman's eyes not only focused: they did not for an instant blink.

He watched the footie on Tuesday night, of course he did, and said he was hugely disappointed in the end, and knew that everyone shared the disappointment. But there is no guf from Henman about determination to put a smile back on the face of the nation.

But all the same, he has done so, by going a round better than expected. He goes on to play Pete Sampras, which is a bit like being drawn against Brazil, though without the frilly bits. Though come to think of it, Sampras is more like one of great German sides. He makes even the flashiest passages of play look like an aspect of remorseless efficiency.

So what advice can we give Henman for the semi-final tomorrow? No 1, avoid a penalty shoot-out. No 2, hope for a Russian linesman. If Henman gets one of those, he's home and hosed.

Experience of old brigade too much for rising stars

By ALEX RAMSAY

THE teenagers are showing their age at last. With the exception of Martina Hingis, who has always acted a good 20 years older than the age on her passport, the young and the brave have been undone by the old and experienced as Wimbledon has progressed. The semi-finals today will feature Nathalie Tauziat, 30, against Natasha Zvereva, 27, and Jana Novotna, 29, against Hingis, 17 going on 40.

The last of the new generation fell on Centre Court yesterday as Venus Williams, a self-professed future champion, was taught a few lessons in playing on grass and holding your nerve when it matters by Novotna in what turned out to be an intriguing tussle. Williams may be the apple of the American public's eye but at the All England Club, her demeanour smacks of arrogance. Novotna, on the other hand, has lost tearfully and graciously in two finals and that sort of thing matters around these parts.

When it comes to the tennis in SW19, what matters is touch, imagination and a large helping of experience. Against the sheer power of Williams, it took Novotna a few games to find her way but once she had fathomed the Williams service — top speed 119mph: it was a slow day by the American's standards — and her weaknesses (yes, she can volley but only if she happens to be in the right place at the right time and, no, she does not like the ball played low to her ankles), the match was on.

Williams's early 4-1 lead was wiped out in the seventh game and then Novotna pulled ahead, breaking Williams for 6-5. It was done by the simplest of tactics — put the first volley behind the opponent and if she gets that one back, put the next one into open space. It is easy when you know how. With the first set gone 7-5, Williams began to twitch.

A doubtful line call at the start of the second set had Williams furious. She stomped over the baseline judge to give her a piece of her mind and then yelled at the umpire. "You've got to call them," Novotna kept quiet and broke for a 1-0 lead while the American was left to sob into her towel at the change-over. Williams broke back and then let fly again, this time at the other end of the court. Novotna broke again. It was all becoming a little predictable. Williams managed to break back to level the scores but in the tie break she was allowed just two points and Novotna was through 7-5, 7-6.

At least she will know what to expect in today's match, which is a repeat of the final of last year. Hingis dropped her first set of the tournament and eventually ousted Arantxa Sanchez Vicario — never an easy task — 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 to confirm her place in the semi-finals. Sanchez Vicario must be getting paid by the set at these championships. In all but one of her matches she has played the full three sets after dropping the first one.

Yesterday she raced away to a 2-0 lead and then seemed stunned by the achievement as she allowed Hingis to take command. Not that the world No 1 was willing to take every chance she was given. Both women racked up the unforced errors and while Hingis gathered break points by the hat full, she let most of them slip as Sanchez Vicario dug in for a long scrap. But not even the most battle-hardened of competitors can overcome five weeks of physical and mental exertion and three weeks after winning the French Open, Sanchez Vicario succumbed to sheer fatigue.

It was much the same for Monica Seles as she took on Zvereva. Although she remembered to bring her racket and her tennis kit to the All England Club, she left her form and her game plan back at home. Against a wily doubles tactician, and a hugely

unfulfilled singles talent, Seles was stranded. Zvereva toyed with her opponent, pulling her into the net with drop shots and then passing her with pinpoint backhands. She lobbed, she volleyed and Seles went out 7-6, 6-2. What happened, she was asked: "I don't know," Seles replied. "Did you have trouble concentrating? I really don't know," she sighed.

Lindsay Davenport, of the United States, the No 2 seed, who has remained largely anonymous during the past few rounds, was finally uncovered by Tauziat 6-3, 6-3. Davenport has never found Wimbledon to be a happy hunting ground and yesterday was no exception. Tauziat is one of the few players happy to play on grass, but she had

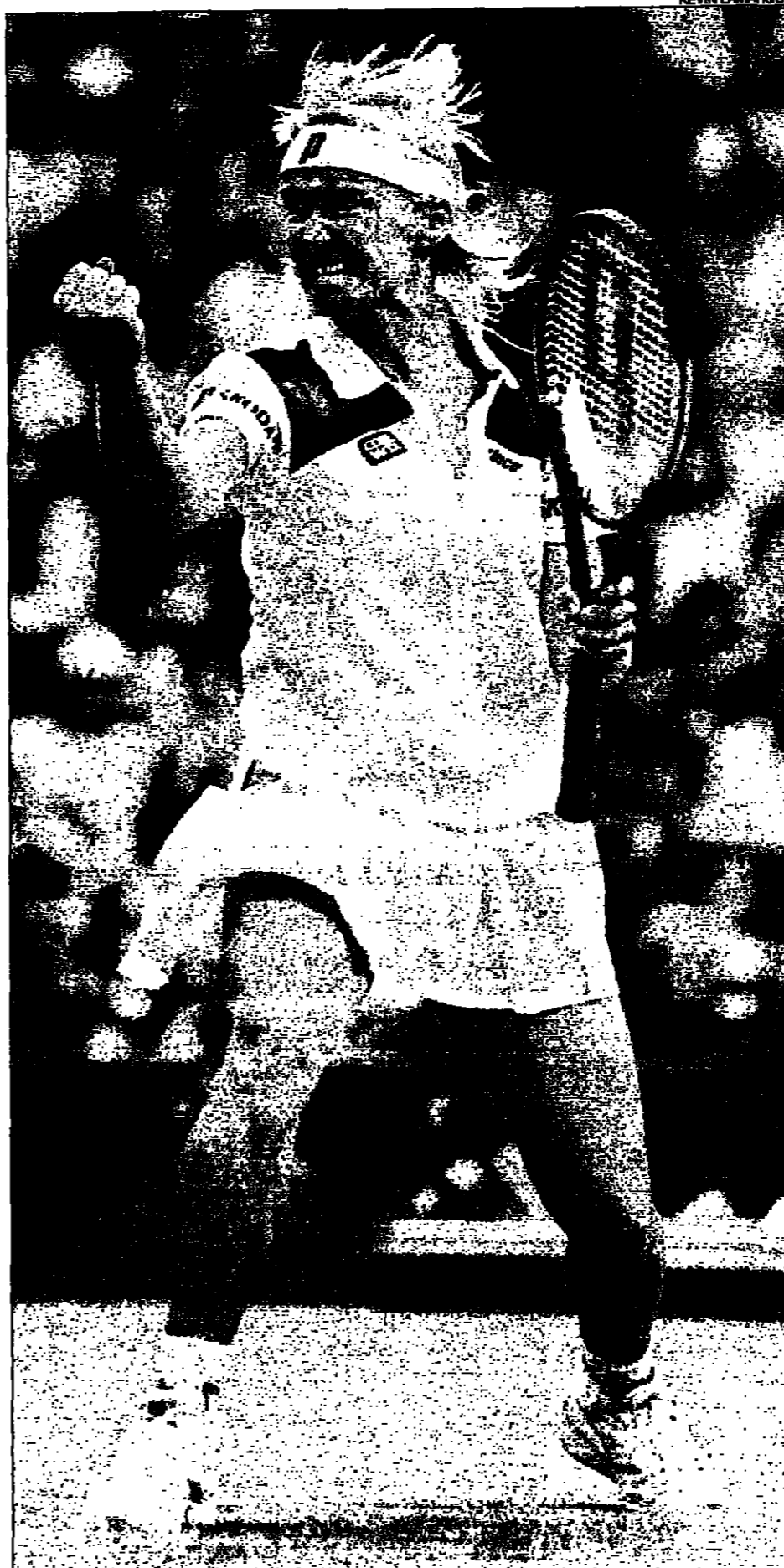
devised a cunning plan for Davenport — stay back and beat the American at her own game and then go to the net and frighten her with the volley. It worked a treat but Tauziat, who is never short of self-belief, always knew that it would. Did she think she would triumph so easily? "Yes," was the simple answer. That's Tauziat for you.

More surprising was the departure of Neil Broad, the Great Britain Davis Cup player who partnered Tim Henman to a silver medal in the Olympic Games at Atlanta in 1996.

Seeded No 14 in tandem with his regular partner, Piet Norval, of South Africa, he went out in straight sets to the unseeded American combination of Justin Gimelstob and Brian MacPhie. 6-3, 7-6.



TELEVISION TODAY: BBC2 1:00-8:30pm (with cricket); BBC1 1:40-4:20pm; Highlights: BBC2 9:30-10:25pm



Novotna shows the determination that took her past Williams into the semi-finals

Top seeds relax in sparkling show

By NICK SZCZEPANIK

IT IS not necessary to hold tickets for the show courts to see the world's top tennis players performing at Wimbledon. Ground passes allow access to seats on No 3 Court, and all were taken well before the appearance of Martina Hingis and Jana Novotna for their doubles match against the Japanese pair, Nana Miyagi and Naoko Kijimuta, the No 11 seeds, which they won 6-3, 6-4.

People who could not get a seat crammed into the aisles, stood on benches, craned their necks, and generally did whatever it took to catch a glimpse of the top seeds, who play each other in the semi-finals of the singles today, in a replay of the 1997 final.

After the tension of their difficult quarter-final matches in the singles, Hingis and Novotna were in the mood to relax and entertain in the doubles. No, let's be honest, they were in the mood to showboat and play shamelessly to the crowds. But why not? The punters loved it, although Miyagi and Kijimuta, who squandered a 4-1 second-set advantage, probably did not.

Whether the favourites will be on speaking terms after tomorrow remains to be seen. Novotna fell out with a previous doubles partner, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, over a line-call in a singles match in the 1996 US Open, and they barely spoke a civil word to each other for a year.

Sanchez Vicario, now in partnership with Helena Sukova, also progressed to the quarter-finals in straight sets. They are seeded to meet Novotna and Hingis in the semi-finals.

There were two doubles matches with British interest yesterday, with the accent on the past tense. Chris Wilkinson and Lorna Woodroffe had just one break of service against them in each set of their match against the Dutch combination of Paul Haarhuis and Caroline Vis, before going out 6-4, 6-4. It was not unexpected, as their opponents are the No 2 seeds.

More surprising was the departure of Neil Broad, the Great Britain Davis Cup player who partnered Tim Henman to a silver medal in the Olympic Games at Atlanta in 1996.

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Title talk no longer double Dutch to Ivanisevic

By NICK SZCZEPANIK



Ivanisevic having fun

THE man who came from nowhere to win Wimbledon will play the man who has been everywhere and won nothing when Richard Krajicek, the 1996 champion, faces Goran Ivanisevic in the men's singles semi-finals tomorrow.

Both won their quarter-finals in straight sets yesterday, but whereas Krajicek came through without difficulty against Davide Sanguineti, of Italy, Ivanisevic needed three tie-breaks to overcome Jan Siemerink, the Dutchman.

Krajicek, showing few signs of the knee injury that had required treatment overnight, found the unheralded Sanguineti little threat to his own service, although the Italian managed to pass the former champion on more than one occasion. However, he only held his own service once in the first set.

Sanguineti did better in the second, holding three times, and even got to defence on Krajicek's service, but two aces put him firmly

in his place. Krajicek's service was altogether a far more fearsome proposition, so a 6-4 score in the third set represented progress, but it was Krajicek who went through.

"It looks pretty good, semi-finals," Krajicek said. "There was less pressure for me two years ago and the more pressure now, and the only thing I have as an advantage is I know I can win here."

"I haven't shown unbelievable, spectacular tennis, like the way I beat Stich and Sampras two years ago, but I think solid performance is the way to go for me at the moment and we'll see what happens."

There was more chance of an upset — or at least of someone getting upset — on Court No 2, where Ivanisevic, seeded No 16, was talking on Krajicek's compatriot, Siemerink. The Croat's service was reliable but his returns unpredictable: a lazy hack, a perfectly judged

lob, a wild swipe, a superb pass — pick any one from a long list. Those four, by the way, all came in one game, the last before the first-set tie-break, which was pure Ivanisevic.

Leading 3-0, he had to survive four set points, twice sent down pairs of aces and eventually won on a double-fault by Siemerink.

In the second set, Ivanisevic dropped his service and found himself 5-2 down before breaking back and taking the tie-break, and he repeated the whole thing in the third, this time falling behind 5-4, surviving a further set point, then producing two superlative backhands, one to either side, to restore the break.

It went to another tie-break, but then those who follow Ivanisevic probably prefer it that way — there is more drama. If there was any sense of let-down, it was that Ivanisevic only needed one match point to advance to a meeting with Krajicek,

whom he has beaten in the last eight of their ten encounters.

In a final touch of theatre, he threw his shirt into the crowd before departing bare-chested into the throng, while post-match thoughts ranged over his facial appearance and the possibility of Croatia being drunk for a year if Ivanisevic wins Wimbledon and the football team wins the World Cup. But more conventional matters also came up.

"It was very tough and mentally I surprised myself today," Ivanisevic said. "It was very good. It's my eleventh Wimbledon and it's most fun this year. I'm winning, it's been great so far and I don't know how it's going to finish, but maybe this is the year for me."

Krajicek admitted that he had considered the possibility. He said: "Goran, I said before the tournament is going to be dangerous because this is the first time that nobody expects anything, including himself."

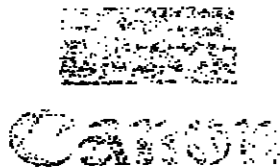
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SPORT IN BRIEF

Brittan takes title with style

BOWLS: Richard Brittan, the English champion from Erdington Court in Birmingham, beat Steve Jackson 21-18 to win the British Isles singles championship at Ayr Northfield yesterday (David Rhys Jones writes).

BOXING: Lennox Lewis has issued a challenge to Evander Holyfield to meet him in a unification contest in December in the United States (Srikumar Sen writes). Lewis's promoters have secured from HBO, the American television company behind Lewis, the \$20 million (about £2.5 million) that Holyfield was seeking to risk his World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation titles against Britain's World Boxing Council heavyweight champion.

CRICKET: Scotland, set 165 to win, beat Wales by three wickets at Ayr yesterday to move within one win of retaining the Triple Crown. At Lintinshaw, Ireland, defending 171 for nine, beat the England ECB XI by four runs.

POLO: Buffalos put together by Jean-Francois Decaux, beat Los Tamaros 11-10 in the league C encounter in the British Open tournament for the Verve Cheetah Gold Cup at Kerry Packer's club at Stedham, Sussex, yesterday.



Hammond, centre, a last-minute replacement, lends his weight to the Bradford-on-Avon crew but cannot stop them slipping to defeat yesterday

Haining pays dearly for lapse

PETER HAINING, a losing Diamond Sculls finalist last year, made an early exit from the event yesterday when Tristan Pascoal, of Australia, nearly four stone heavier, beat the British lightweight by one foot. Haining led by three lengths at the mile, seemingly in control. Pascoal then increased the pressure approaching the finish. "I thought he was making a mad charge," Haining said, but then admitted, "he caught me napping."

though, in a very respectable way. Ken Beattie, the lightweight from Canada, will be Greg Searle's first challenger today as the Briton starts the defence of his title. Beattie looked controlled in beating Dave Linley, from Australia. The eagerly awaited contest between the selected St Mary's Prep crew, from the United States, and Holy Cross School, from Canada, in the Princess Elizabeth Cup for schools was something of a letdown.

St Mary's are renowned for their fast start and Holy Cross were determined to counter it, but it all went wrong when Holy Cross's bow side had a messy start and their boat left the blocks in a semi-circle. St Mary's were gone and produced intermediate times to raise the eyebrows of the selected British crews. One of these, Abingdon School, looked as though they might suffer a surprise defeat to Canford when the Dorset schoolboys led to halfway. Abingdon kept their heads, though, and came through to win by half a length. Eton, the national schools champion, won with something to spare and impressive performances came from St Edwards and Radley, the latter having to beat Shrewsbury twice after Shrewsbury suffered steering failure in the first race.

The B crew of London RC broke their rudder during their warm-up in the Thames Cup eights, but Michael Owen, their stroke man, had better fortune than his fellowing namesake when his crew beat Vesta. London's A and B crews face each other today. The two London fours in the Wyfold Four were involved in two great races. Their A crew lost to Molesey by three feet, but the B crew held off a strong challenge from Upper Thames to win by three feet. The heaviest man rowing at Henley yesterday was Damian Hammond, at 18st 8lb. Hammond, 33, a discus thrower and coach of Kingston RC, was given 15 minutes notice that he was replacing Tony Crosbie in the Bradford-on-Avon Wyfold four. Crosbie's wife, Anna, had gone into labour. Bradford were beaten by the Dresden crew, from the United States. "I was massively under-rigged," Hammond said. No selected crews were racing in the Temple Cup student

eights yesterday, but their were good wins for First and Third Trinity, who beat Lady Margaret by a quarter of a length, and Manchester University, who recorded the same verdict over Hautes Etudes Commerciales, of France. Lea RC caused the first upset in the Britannia coxed fours by soundly beating the selected Queen's Tower crew. Competition begins in five more events today, including the women's sculls where the two selected scullers, Guin Batzen, of Great Britain and Maria Brandin, the holder from Sweden, look likely to progress. Gina Douglas, Australia's new sculler, faces Bethia Woolf, of Thames, the British Under-23 indoor rowing champion. Woolf fell off her bicycle while helping to coach Black Sheep RC last Sunday, but seems to have recovered.

Johnson backs Smith to turn tide at Everton

By DAVID MADDOCK IT WAS hard yesterday for Peter Johnson to hide the triumphant smile of a man who had finally got it right, despite the grumbling noises that were emanating from across the Pennines. Johnson, the Everton chairman, introduced Walter Smith as the club's new manager at a press conference. Trying hard not to sound too self-satisfied, lest Sheffield Wednesday should feel any more hurt at the fact that Smith had been snatched from their clutches, Johnson still took pride in the quality of his new recruit. "The fact is that we can't keep changing manager every year and that makes this appointment a big decision," he said. "We had to get it right and I believe we have. I'm far more upbeat than I was last year, because in Walter Smith we have a big club manager who knows how to handle big-time players."

Smith takes with him Archie Knox as assistant manager. Both have signed three-year contracts. "Wednesday made a very good offer and their chairman went out of his way to make me feel welcome. I was not far away from an agreement with them when I was asked to come to Everton. In the end, my mind was made up because Everton are — historically — such a big club." Smith takes with him Archie Knox as assistant manager. Both have signed three-year contracts. "Wednesday made a very good offer and their chairman went out of his way to make me feel welcome. I was not far away from an agreement with them when I was asked to come to Everton. In the end, my mind was made up because Everton are — historically — such a big club." Smith takes with him Archie Knox as assistant manager. Both have signed three-year contracts. "Wednesday made a very good offer and their chairman went out of his way to make me feel welcome. I was not far away from an agreement with them when I was asked to come to Everton. In the end, my mind was made up because Everton are — historically — such a big club."



Smith: advice

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS FROM WIMBLEDON

Men's singles: Winner: 6,435,000. Runner-up: £217,500. Holder: P Sampras (US). Quarter-finals: R KRAJICEK (Hol) bt D Sanguinetti (It) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2. G WANG (Chn) bt J Sierrenk (Hol) 7-6, 7-6, 7-5. P SAMPRAS (US) bt M Philippoussis (Aus) 7-6, 6-4, 6-4. Men's doubles: Winner: £178,220. Runner-up: £89,100. Holders: T A Woodbridge (Aus) and M Woodforde (Aus). Third round: N KULTI (Swe) and D MACPHERSON (Aus) bt J KAFELNIKOV (Rus) and D Vacek (Cz) 7-6, 6-3, 6-3. D JORJANOVIC (Ser) and S LARAU (Can) bt D JORJANOVIC (Ser) and P MONTANA (US) 6-3, 7-6, 7-6. T A WOODBRIDGE (Aus) and M WOODFORDE (Aus) bt J L de Jager (SA) and R Koenig (SA) 6-1, 7-6, 6-2. J GONZALEZ (US) and P MacPHERSON (Aus) bt R BRADY (GB) and P NORVAL (SA) 6-3, 7-6. J BURMAN (Swe) and P RAFTER (Aus) bt M JONDLES (Bah) and D NESTOR (Can) 7-5, 5-7, 6-2. N KULTI (Swe) and D Macpherson (Aus) bt J Yablonski (Rus) and D Vacek (Cz) 7-6, 6-3, 6-3. Women's singles: Winner: £391,500. Runner-up: £195,750. Holder: M Hingis (Swe). Quarter-finals: N Zvereva (Bel) bt M SELES (US) 7-6, 6-2. M HINGIS (Swe) bt P SANCHIZ VICARIO (Sp) 6-3, 3-6, 6-4. L DAVENPORT (US) bt L A SANFORD (US) 6-3, 6-3. J NOVOTNA (Cz) bt V WILLIAMS (US) 7-5, 7-6. Women's doubles: Winner: £75,700. Runner-up: £37,850. Holders: C Suk (Cz) and H Sukova (Cz). Third round: J White (US) and K Po (US) bt J Delgado (Esp) and E E Jaks (GB) 6-1, 6-2. Mixed doubles: Winner: £75,700. Runner-up: £37,850. Holders: C Suk (Cz) and H Sukova (Cz). Third round: J White (US) and K Po (US) bt J Delgado (Esp) and E E Jaks (GB) 6-1, 6-2.

TODAY'S ORDER OF PLAY AT WIMBLEDON

CENTRE COURT (11.0): N Zvereva v N TALAZAT (Fr); M HINGIS (Swe) v J NOVOTNA (Cz); J BURMAN (Swe) and P RAFTER (Aus) v E FERREIRA (SA) and R LEACH (US). No 1 COURT (11.0): J ELTINGH (Hol) and P HAARHUIS (Hol) v N Godwin (Ind) and L NEILAND (US); F LABAT (SA) and S Noorlander (Hol); F LABAT (SA) and S Noorlander (Hol); F LABAT (SA) and S Noorlander (Hol); F LABAT (SA) and S Noorlander (Hol). No 2 COURT (11.0): G DE ARMAS (Ven) v P Mauer (Aus); P MacPHERSON (Aus) and S STEVEN (NZ) v WOODBRIDGE (Aus) and M WOODFORDE (Aus); R Koenig (SA) and E Likhovitschev (Rus); S Stolle (Aus) and K Kunc (Aus); D S Stolle (Aus) and K Kunc (Aus); D S Stolle (Aus) and K Kunc (Aus); D S Stolle (Aus) and K Kunc (Aus). No 3 COURT (11.0): S DICKSON (GB) v A QURESHI (Pak); R GRANDE (It) and R NELSEN (US) v RAYMOND (US) and L BERENSON (US); S DICKSON (GB) v A QURESHI (Pak); R GRANDE (It) and R NELSEN (US) v RAYMOND (US) and L BERENSON (US). No 4 COURT (11.0): F SARETTA (It) v D Martin (US); L CHENES (GB) and A HOBBE (GB) v M Jausovec (Sloven); V Nemec (SA); A Jaser (GB) and Smith (GB) v M Edmondson (Aus) and P Fleming (US); B Borella (Den) and K Pless (Den) v Gonzalez King (Arg) and E Massa (Arg). No 5 COURT (11.0): I LABADZE (Ges) v E Bergmann (It); E DOMINIKOVIC (Mont) v M Malozki (Sloven); M Malozki (Sloven) and P MacPHERSON (Aus) v M De Swardt (SA) and R NIELAND (US); E DOMINIKOVIC (Mont) v M Malozki (Sloven); M Malozki (Sloven) and P MacPHERSON (Aus) v M De Swardt (SA) and R NIELAND (US). No 6 COURT (11.0): R Ram (Ind) v R VIK (Nor); K Hippoparistis (US) and M Trudgion (US) v M Hingis (Swe) and M Trudgion (US); N McDonald (SA) and L Zovko (Cro) v M Ludra (Fr) and A Ram (It).

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS FROM HENLEY

Thames Cup: Holder: Nottingham A. First round: Queen's Tower bt Vesta RC B 3/4 lengths, 6min 44sec. Nottingham and Union RC bt Reading RC 3/4, 6:51. Molesey BC bt Star Club 3/4, 7:04. London RC bt Vesta RC 3/4, 6:45. Cambridge 99 RC bt Thames RC A 11, 6:37. Sydney RC (Aus) bt City of Oxford RC 3/4, 6:07. Funnival Sculling Club bt Club Nautique Charentaise (Fr) row-over Newcastle University at Magdalen College, Cambridge 41, 6:57. Thames Tradesmen's RC bt Staines BC easily, 6:44. Bowbridge BC bt Garda Siochana BC (Ire) 21, 6:29. Commercial RC (Ire) bt Twickenham RC 2/4, 6:46. Auriol Kensington RC bt Lansbury RC 1/4, 6:44. Thames RC bt Army RC 2/4, 6:48. London RC bt Penn Athletic Club (US) 3/4, 6:27. Black Sheep RC bt Der Hamburger and Germania Ruder Club (Ger) 1/4, 6:40. Nottingham BC bt Oygnet RC easily, 6:30. Kingston RC bt Walton RC 3/4, 6:53. Princess Elizabeth Cup: Holder: St Paul's. First round: The Oratory School bt Pangbourne College A 11, 6:44. Hampton School B bt Radley Modern School 3/4, 6:50. Westminister School bt Pangbourne College B 2/4, 6:48. St Paul's School, Concord (US) bt King Edward VII School (SA) bt Hampton School B 21, 6:58. Radley College bt Auckland Grammar School (NZ) easily, 6:35. C St Paul's School bt Prince Alfred College (Aus) 1/4, 6:43. Bedford School bt Shrewsbury School 11, 6:45. King's School, Chester bt Shipkale College 11, 6:35. St Edward's School bt Kingston Grammar School 21, 6:44. Abingdon School A bt Canford School 1/4, 6:39. St Mary's Prep School (US) bt Holy Cross (Can) 3/4, 6:38. Eton College bt St Joseph's College (Ire) 2/4, 6:42. Abingdon School B bt Bedford Modern School 3/4, 6:50. Radley College A bt Shrewsbury School A 31, 6:35. Wyfold Cup: Holder: Molesey A. First round: Molesey BC bt London Rowing Club A 3/4, 6:52. Worcester RC bt Thames Tradesmen's RC 1/4, 7:19. Natwest RC bt Marlow RC 1/4, 7:12. Dresden RC A (US) bt Bradford-on-Avon RC 41, 7:34. Royal Chester RC bt Twickenham RC 1/4, 7:03. Kingston RC bt Nottingham BC 21, 6:58. The Tideway Scullers' School bt Dresden Rowing Club A (US) not rowed out. London RC bt Upper Thames RC 3/4, 7:06. Clyde Amateur RC bt Staines BC 3/4, 7:04.



Members of the Molesey BC crew celebrate a win over the Star Club at Henley yesterday

WORLD CUP 98

England's class of '98: the end of term report

Michael Owen was the outstanding individual of the World Cup, yet others struggled to justify reputations. Oliver Holt makes his final judgment

RATING: A+

MICHAEL OWEN: Appearances: 4 (2 as substitute). Goals: 2. The star of the show. His performances in this World Cup and particularly his brilliant individual goal against Argentina have established him as an international superstar at the age of 18. Once he had displaced Teddy Sheringham in the starting line-up, he was unstoppable. Terrified some of the world's best defenders.

RATING: A

SOL CAMPBELL: Appearances: 4. Exceeded all expectations. He was solid and reliability personified but also added a new dimension to his game, with his surging runs out of defence. Executed several superb last-ditch tackles and threatened to score what would have been the goal of the tournament against Colombia with a charge from one end of the pitch to the other.

PAUL INCE: Appearances: 4. At his tenacious best throughout, Ince was the best of an inspired bunch against Argentina. At times, he looked as if he could run through any tackle, break any challenge. He ran tirelessly, tackled like a titan and broke forward dangerously from midfield. His discipline, which had been a worry, was excellent.

RATING: A-

ALAN SHEARER: Appearances: 4. Goals: 2 (1 pen). Never looked like challenging for the Golden Boot, but still had a fine World Cup. Role changed when Owen started alongside him and he proved that he could be provider and goalscorer. Worked hard and unselfishly and did enough to suggest he is still a big threat.

TONY ADAMS: Appearances: 4. Began shakily, but admitted that he was "growing" with the tournament and by the time Argentina came along he was back to his very best. Titanic performance in St-Etienne, where he was first to every ball to help to keep Argentina at bay.



Back row, from left: Les Ferdinand, Steve McManaman, Darren Anderton, Ray Clemence (goalkeeping coach), Tim Flowers, David Seaman, Nigel Martyn, Tony Adams, Rio Ferdinand, Sol Campbell. Middle row: Gary Lewin (physiotherapist), Steve Slattery (masseur), Terry Byrne (masseur), Michelle Farrer (team administrator), David Beckham, Gareth Southgate, Teddy Sheringham, Martin Keown, Paul Merson, Rob Lee, John Crane (team doctor), Tim Sonnex (assistant physiotherapist). Front row: Glenn Roeder (assistant coach), Gary Neville, Paul Scholes, Graeme Le Saux, Michael Owen, John Gorman (assistant coach), Glenn Hoddle (coach), Alan Shearer, David Batty, Paul Ince, Peter Taylor (assistant coach), David Davies (press officer)

RATING: B+

DARREN ANDERTON: Appearances: 4. Goals: 1. Hoddle caused controversy by preferring him to David Beckham in the first two group games, but Anderton repaid his faith with a series of increasingly assured performances at right wing back and the crucial opening goal against Colombia.

but stood shoulder to shoulder with Adams and Campbell against Argentina.

GARETH SOUTHGATE: Appearances: 2 (1 as substitute). Unlucky to pick up an ankle injury after playing well in the first match against Tunisia. Unable to win his place back from Neville, he did not let anybody down when he was brought on for Le Saux against Argentina.

RATING: B

PAUL SCHOLES: Appearances: 4. Goals: 1. He began as though he was going to be one of the stars of the tournament, playing the leading role in the victory over Tunisia. But he faded and was about the only player who failed to rise to the occasion against Argentina. Can still be proud of his overall contribution.

GARY NEVILLE: Appearances: 3. Left out of the opening game but seized his chance when Gareth Southgate was injured and performed as creditably and solidly as ever in the other three matches. Felt his way into the match with Romania

DAVID BATTY: Appearances: 3 (1 as substitute). Will always be remembered for missing the penalty that put England out of France 98 and becoming the successor to Gareth Southgate and Stuart Pearce. Even though he lost his place to Beckham in the last two games, Batty performed with distinction in his holding role, and particularly in the rearguard action against Argentina, and can hold his head up high.



GLENN HODDLE: Like Bobby Robson before him, the England coach fumbled towards his best line-up. His refusal to play Owen from the start of the game against Romania may have cost England the chance of winning group G and his handling of Beckham's omission was clumsy and unsure. He deserves credit for having the courage to change and to pick Owen and Beckham from the start in the final two matches and finished by presiding over a team that looked like world-beaters. Rating: B

RATING: B-

DAVID SEAMAN: Appearances: 4. Showed uncharacteristic signs of weakness and uncertainty in this World Cup that suggest he has started to believe his own publicity. Conceded needless penalty in the opening minutes against Argentina and, while not embarrassing himself, generally failed to command the defence with his usual aplomb.

NIGEL MARTYN: Appearances: 0. Seaman did not quite play poorly enough to give Martyn his chance, but his time may come.

TIM FLOWERS: Appearances: 0. Likely to join Seaman and Martyn in the fight for the No 1 spot, but his role in La Baule was confined to being a good trainer.

OTHER PLAYERS

RIO FERDINAND: Appearances: 0. Unlucky not to be given a chance but is set to be a mainstay of the forthcoming European championship campaign.

LES FERDINAND: Appearances: 0. His only serious mention during the tournament came when there was news that he had picked up a

minor hamstring strain. Typical, really.

MARTIN KEOWN: Appearances: 0. Another who was unfortunate not to play, he was a victim of Neville's consistency and Hoddle's reluctance to man-mark any opponent. Might have helped to nullify Hagi against Romania.

RATING: C

TEDDY SHERINGHAM: Appearances: 2. Performed well enough in the opening game against Tunisia with some typically intuitive touches, but was ineffective against Romania. Engulfed by the tidal wave that was Owen, this tournament may have marked the end of his international career.

the left, but he was found sadly wanting for the Dan Petrescu goal that won the match for Romania in injury time. Recovered well from that but the memory will stain the tournament for him.

DAVID BECKHAM: Appearances: 3 (1 as substitute). Goals: 1. Some might suggest Beckham deserves grade P after his moment of stupidity effectively cost England the chance of beating Argentina. But he showed signs in this tournament of maturing into a

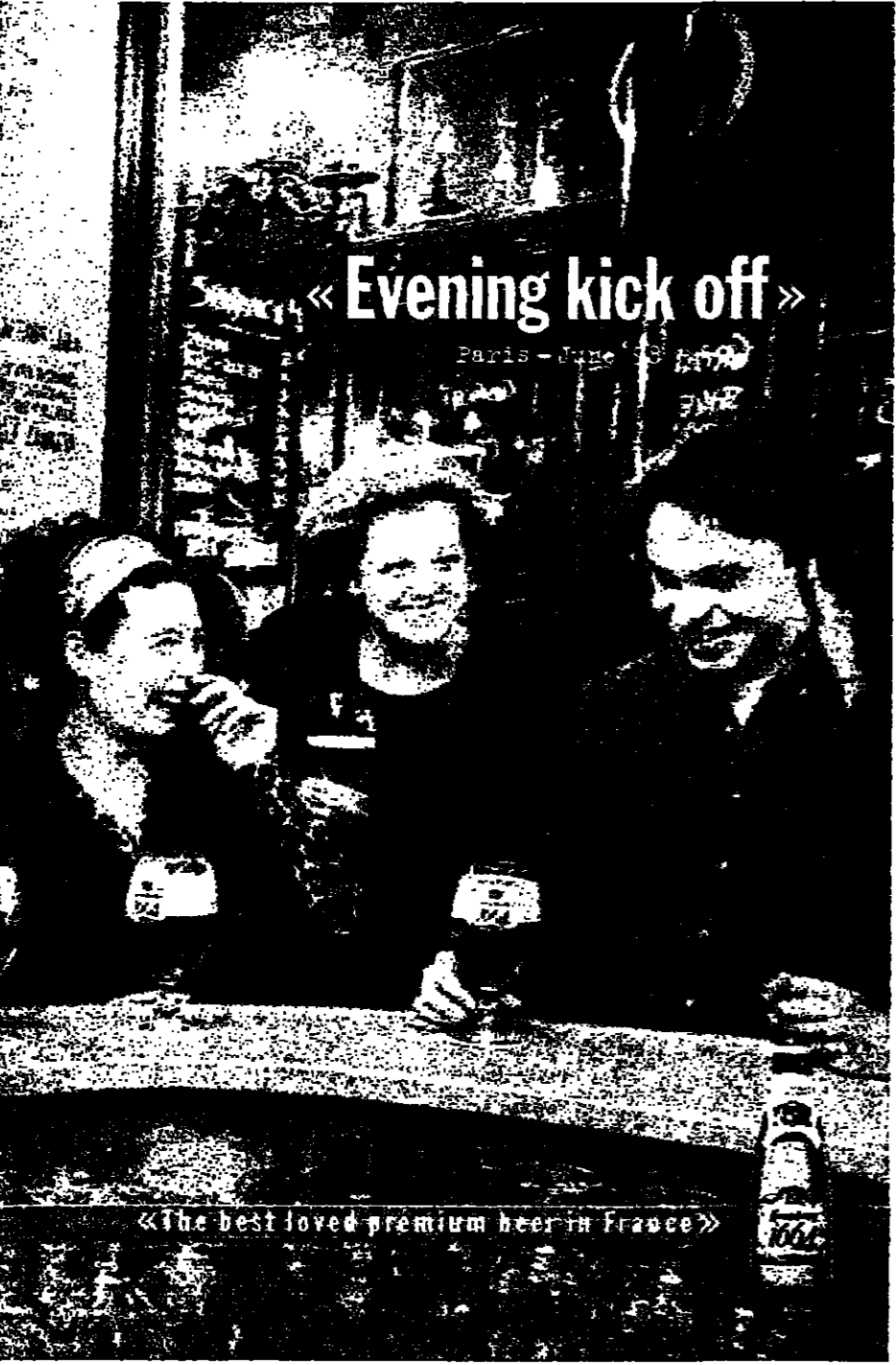
GRAEME LE SAUX: Appearances: 4. Not one of his finest hours. Le Saux attacked well enough and provided plenty of ammunition from

truly world-class central midfielder player. His free-kick goal against Colombia was sublime, his pass to Owen for the second goal against Argentina an aesthetic delight. He still has a bright future if his lack of self-discipline does not blight his career.

STEVE McMANAMAN: Appearances: 1 (as substitute). Only given a brief chance to show what he could do in the second half against Colombia. Still waiting to come of age as an international. Frustrating

tournament for him as he watched his club colleague, Owen, reach for the skies.

PAUL MERSON: Appearances: 1 (as substitute). Only did one thing right in this tournament and that was score his penalty in the shoot-out against Argentina. Looked woefully short of match practice when he was brought on for his only appearance against the South Americans and wasted several precious set-piece opportunities with poor delivery.



«The best loved premium beer in France»

Forget heroic failures, we have to change our spots

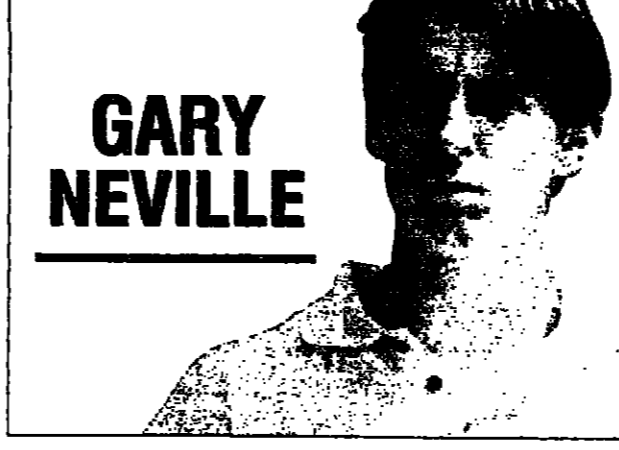
I was nervous when David Batty went up to take his penalty kick on Tuesday night. It wasn't because I thought he would miss. In fact, it was the opposite. I was expecting that he would score and I knew that I was next up. I'd been told that I was the sixth penalty-taker.

About five minutes from the end of extra time, I had started getting a bit nervous. I was looking round the pitch and thinking: 'I cannot see any natural penalty-takers out here.' Apart from Alan Shearer, Michael Owen and Paul Merson. I didn't see anybody in the team that would even be a substitute penalty-taker for their club.

At the end of the game, I was told I would be the sixth, and by the time Batts went up to take his, I was definitely starting to feel the tension. I don't usually get any nerves after a game has begun, but this was different. When the Argentinian lad scored from their fifth penalty and Batts started walking up, I was thinking 'Right, I'm next on here.'

I was saying to myself that I had to get my head right, that I had to clear my mind of everything. There was no relief when the goalkeeper saved his kick just crushing disappointment. Of course, I wish dearly that I had had the opportunity to have a go, because that would have meant we were still in with a chance, but it was not to be.

It was harder to bear because, as the second half had worn on and we had taken it into extra time, we were all buzzing. The atmosphere was fantastic and we knew we were all in together,



GARY NEVILLE

all fighting for each other and restricting the Argentinians so much that I can't remember them creating a single clear-cut chance when we were down to ten men.

I could see on their faces that they weren't happy, that they felt they should be beating a ten-man side, and I was so confident that we were going to win. We all had a feeling of "right, let's show them" after Becks had been sent off and it was hard for them to play against us because we were so determined. It had got to the stage where I felt we had to be rewarded for the way we had defended and the way we had refused to be battered by what was obviously a very good side.

It was difficult to come back the way we did from being a goal down, because usually when that happens a team like Argentina will hold on to

now and they will probably make the semis, but I look at their team and I think: 'Surely we would beat them.' But we do not seem to be able to do it in the big competitions.

We have got to stop using inexperience as an excuse because although some of us have had relatively short careers, we have packed a lot into them. I don't know what it is, why we fall short. We just need to find that something that is missing, that one piece of luck, that one referee's decision that goes for us and not against us, and perhaps then that will push us to the extra mile.

I know some people are trying to point the finger at Becks for us going out, but I think that is unfair. There was no resentment from anyone in the team against him. There is not one of us who has not made a bad pass or missed a penalty or made some sort of error in a match. I did a two-footed tackle in extra time when a bit of frustration had started to creep in, but I was not punished. Becks was, but he has got the strength and the ability to come back from it.

It would be easy to dwell on what might have been, but I stopped doing that a long time ago. I had my disappointments in this World Cup when my brother, Phil, and Nicky Butt were left out of the squad, and when I was left out of the first game, but in all I thoroughly enjoyed it. You just have to move on to the next challenge straight away. I'm going to have a quick holiday and then start thinking about Manchester United and the European championship qualifying games.

'It is about time we damn well won a match like that'

did it rather than falling at a hurdle like that. I look at the United team and I know that that team is as good as teams like Juventus and Real Madrid, and in this World Cup I look at teams like Holland and Germany and I know England are as good as them, better than them. The Germans are in the quarter-finals

TOMORROW
ITALY FRANCE 3.30pm, Stade de France, TV, RSL/Talk
BRAZIL DENMARK 8pm, Nantes, TV, RSL/Talk
SATURDAY
HOLLAND ARGENTINA 3.30pm, Marseilles, BBC1, RSL/Talk
GERMANY CROATIA 8pm, Lyons, BBC1, RSL/Talk

Henry fear on eve of Italy match

FRANCE may have to do without their leading marksman Thierry Henry when they face Italy in the first quarter-final of this World Cup in the Stade de France tomorrow afternoon.

Henry, who has scored three goals in the tournament, is nursing a sprained left ankle, an injury sustained in the second-round victory over Paraguay on Sunday. "If I can, I will play," Henry said yesterday. "If not, we are not going to take any risks."

Aimé Jacquet, the French coach, however, will be able to count on the return of Zinedine Zidane, who has served a two-match suspension for kicking an opponent against Saudi Arabia.

Emmanuel Petit, who left the Paraguay game with a pain in his right hamstring, is recovering well and should be ready to play alongside Didier Deschamps in midfield.

In the second quarter-final, between Brazil and Denmark in Nantes tomorrow evening, Claudio Taffarel, of Brazil, will set a World Cup record for a goalkeeper. It will be his sixteenth appearance in the finals, beating the previous mark set by his compatriots Gilmar and Emerson Leão.

هكزامن الأمل

WORLD CUP 98

Ultimate passion play with the same old sad ending

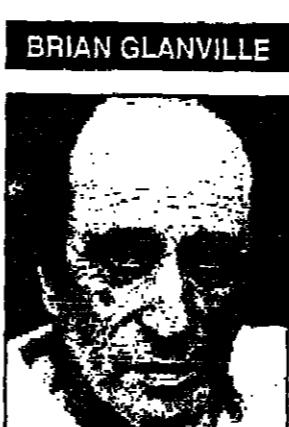


Anderton: repaid faith

In 40 years of watching 11 World Cups, I have seldom been so consumed by the emotions of a game as I was when England held out so gallantly against Argentina, only to fail in the end on their habitual anti-climax penalties. It was, for anyone committed to the English cause, a match of vertiginous emotions: deep despair, sudden hope, surging pride and, at the very last, despair again.

Down to still greater depths of gloom and pessimism when David Beckham, so gratuitously, kicked out at Simeone and, as England players tried to plead Beckham's case, the referee pulled out his red card. Then gathering pride, tinged with astonishment, as the England defence, a Horatius on the bridge, held out against the odds, surely one of the finest rearguard actions in the long history of the England team.

Amount as his shot was saved. England were out. And what can we say of Glenn Hoddle? The England coach can plead ill-fortune after his team's gallant and unlucky exit from this World Cup. Yet the jury must still be out over the question of his merits as an international manager. Alas, he cannot even claim the great gift of one of his predecessors, Bobby Robson: he has not been lucky.



on a performance that moved him like no other

But if Hoddle, in the event, had little luck, how much did he really deserve? A strong case can be made to blame him for the defeat against Romania, who, significantly, after their one impressive game against England, laid down and died against Croatia.

The Owen nightmare will surely return to haunt Hoddle. Somewhere or other, there seems to be a hidden agenda, a deep perversity, a self-destructive obstinacy in the England coach. By comparison with one or two of Owen's young Liverpool team-mates, this marvellously gifted, precocious player, much the finest of his generation, has been a model of restraint — even if he did once get sent off in a minor international.

Yet Hoddle stared the gift horse in the mouth, publicly criticising Owen a few months ago for his alleged comportment on and off the field, declaring that the boy still had much to learn and that he was not even a natural goalscorer.

A less balanced youngster than Owen might have been demoralised by such gratuitous criticism; but Owen allowed it, as the mythical Indian once said, to "flow off his back like duck's water". His goal on Tuesday night was still more remarkable, coming as it did against a defence that had previously gone eight games without giving away a goal at all. Two formidable defenders were left for dead. There is no defence for Hoddle to have kept Owen off the field for so long against Romania.

Rob Hughes says that a young Englishman has emulated Pelé



Owen bursts between Vivas, right, and Ayala, who struggled to contain him in the first half, as he makes tracks towards the Argentina goal. Photograph: Patrick Kovarik

It should surprise no one that England's homecoming from the World Cup became an advertising feature for Concorde, and certainly two Argentine defenders, Roberto Ayala and José Chamot, will not have been at all surprised that Michael Owen, who gave them such a chasing, was travelling close to the speed of sound.

Owen on supersonic flight path to fame

Owen, indeed, is this morning a world name. In France, they are calling him the petit Ronaldo, the phenomenon, the teenager who promises a brighter future for England. So let us do something that Argentina's defence could not manage, get to grips with Owen, one of the nucleus of young players — with Sol Campbell, Gary Neville and Paul Scholes and if he can only discipline his petulance, David Beckham — who gave notice on French soil that the old country can become an international force again.

Asked, only half-mockingly, whether the tape had been speeded up, it was not only the verve and astonishing fleetness of the Liverpool teenager that caught the eye. When he persuaded Kim Milton Nielsen, a good referee from Denmark made into a bad one by the pressures imposed by the Fifa overlords, to give him a penalty, Owen demonstrated the artfulness of a Latin rather than an English footballer.

He knew that Nielsen had already given a debatable penalty to Argentina and seemed to gamble that the referee might want to even things up. When Ayala tried to get out of the way, Owen appeared deliberately to lean into him and fall theatrically. There is a price for such cunning. The moneyed clubs of Europe, every one of whom can do with such a rising star, will be knocking on the door of his agent or his father by the weekend. Make no mistake, Owen, just 18, has made an impact on this World Cup as memorable as Pelé's 40 years ago. Owen would not remember Pelé, but the Brazilian is already among the Owen fan club.

Owen should be left at home to mature under the careful, knowing eye of his father, Terry, who was also 17 when he made his debut for Everton, but whose career was played out in much lower leagues. Owen appears level-headed yet, like Beckham there are, indisposed edges. He has twice been sent off for butting during an Under-21 international for a kick on Ronny Johnsen at Old Trafford. That will not stop the parasitical agents attempting to dislodge him from Anfield. But the fast-moving adventures of Ronaldo should serve as a warning. They moved him from Brazil when he was 16, through PSV Eindhoven at 17, to Barcelona at 18, and now to Internazionale. Ronaldo is not yet tired but he is much bigger and stronger than Owen, who has never moved from the family home near Chester. He has the same agent, Tony Stephens, as Alan Shearer and David Platt. For Shearer, the home fires on Tyne-side seem sufficient; Platt succumbed to the lure of the lira but came to no harm.

Our tragic hero needs sympathy rather than blame

Marseilles I was pretty pointless trying to sleep after the St-Etienne match. At the stadium, people were saying "I don't believe it", in exactly the way you say it when somebody dies. I was stunned, that's all. And slightly in denial. When a match contains so much potential for different happy outcomes you only half-accept the miserable one that's finally real. I mean, that if Beckham hadn't seen red, in both senses? What if the second-half "goal" hadn't been disallowed? And what if Ince had scored his penalty, when Seaman had opened the door to victory with his manly save? What if, instead of England, Argentina were a place of sorrow today, with people hiding inconsolably in cupboards? England going out to Argentina would have been a lot easier to bear had they not played so well. As it was, however, they beat Argentina in every department except

scoreline. There was a crispness to their football, fitness training and a breath of French air had somehow cleared their collective mind. Friday's Colombia had seen their self-confidence rise Tuesday at St-Etienne saw it majestically plateau. They seemed to be working to an agreed plan, while Argentina evidently relied for success on swarthy good looks and sulky expressions. Not only did England not deserve to lose, Argentina did not deserve to win. Some months ago, I wrote a fantastical prediction of England's World Cup in which Gazza messed up by getting himself (and several others) sent off. My idea was that, having shattered England's chances, he miraculously did not become a public pariah. Instead, a clever PR man put him on television to express his remorse. "Thirty years of hurt," he sobbed, "never stopped me dreaming." At which point anger at his stupidity flipped



to warm, glowy forgiveness. Having done nothing whatever to expiate his sin against football, within a year Gazza was fronting charities and replacing Rolf Harris on Animal Hospital. Let's hope David Beckham's agent is on the blower to Martin Bashir right now. Personally, I want to stop feeling uncomfortable about him. I want to stop entertaining the idea of blame. By all rational viewpoints, true enough, Beckham's red card prevented England from winning. But when you think how he must be feeling about it, and when you think how we all bayed for his inclusion and cheered for his fabulous goal,

how can we suddenly be happy for him to suffer such an enormous burden of guilt? And what gives us the moral right? Moral as he is, Beckham has already done more for English football than you or I ever will, that's for sure. It's the least attractive thing about football, the way fans cheerfully bear grudges for mistakes. Recently, in Paris, I happened to see Gordon Smith, the man who missed an open goal for Brighton in the 1983 Cup Final, giving rise to that exquisite forgive-and-forget fable. And Smith missed a goal. You'd think someone might feel sorry for him, but not in football. What Beckham did was, of course, worse than missing a goal, or a penalty. He just blew it, during the most important game played by England for eight years. At least if you make a footballing mistake, your team-mates make that universal gesture of manly sympathy, a rough push on the back of the neck, which is meant to signify "know how you feel, mate", together with "but let's not go on about it". But after the match on Tuesday, apparently, nobody spoke to Beckham because he couldn't speak. Isn't that terrible? I despair of men. Meanwhile, fans load their disappointment on his lean, bony frame, despite the fact that it doesn't make them feel better about anything. What all this makes you realise is that disgrace is the flipside of greatness. You can only let people down if they think you're marvellous. This Beckham incident would make Aristotle dance about in his sandals, it so well illustrates the classical precepts of tragedy. The hero with his

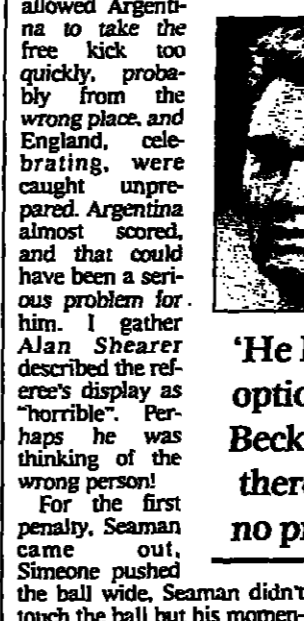
flaw, the audience torn between awe and pity, as the appalled hero asks "what have I done?" The fact that it's his own fault makes Beckham's position perfectly tragic, in fact. The only difference is that he hasn't killed anybody or slept with his Mum. He merely kicked someone on the ankle and revealed himself momentarily as a brat. The approach to this that won't wash is it's only a game. The Adidas ad about "people who love football enough to do something about it" includes three red-carded players, but this hardly invalidates the sentiment. Zidane, Klüvert, Beckham — they do love the game. They love it totally, the way we demand them to. All Beckham needed to do was to say he's sorry, which he has done, to take the wind out of their sails. So now just watch out, Rolf Harris. That job with the kitties in splints may not be as secure as you think. LYNN TRUSS

Close-ups give referee benefit of any doubts

David Elleray says the Danish official in charge of the England game got it spot on

The reaction to the appointment of Kim Milton Nielsen, of Denmark, to the potentially explosive England-Argentina game was positive and widely heralded as sensible. He is a referee with an imposing physical stature who is well-regarded throughout the world. The match, with an absence of brutal play and, largely, gamesmanship, was unlike past England-Argentina matches and this was in part due to Milton Nielsen's accurate decision-making, calmness and imposing presence.

The sending-off of Beckham did not surprise me. We have seen, with the dismissals of Klüvert and Zidane, that a player who is fouled and then reacts against the opponent with his arms or feet — to kick, strike or elbow — has received a red card. The free kick had been given, Beckham was lying on the floor and then he suddenly kicked out. It was a moment of madness. He thought about it. Simeone was still standing there and it was a sneaky kick. Milton Nielsen had no option and Beckham's reaction was clear: he went straight off, he didn't protest. His team-mates didn't protest, either.



'He had no option over Beckham — there were no protests'

Although everybody has tried to blame him for the defeat of England, the accuracy of his decision-making could not be faulted. It was an exceptional performance. When normal frames threw some of his decisions into doubt, close-up replays showed that he was right — for example, Campbell's disallowed goal. Most pundits tended to agree: Terry Venables and Bobby Robson hardly disagreed with anything he did. Possibly his only important mistake came after he had ruled out Campbell's goal. He allowed Argentina to take the free kick too quickly, probably from the wrong place, and England, celebrating, were caught unprepared. Argentina almost scored, and that could have been a serious problem for him. I gather Alan Shearer described the referee's display as "horrible". Perhaps he was thinking of the wrong person!

For the first penalty, Seaman came out, Simeone pushed the ball wide, Seaman didn't touch the ball but his momentum brought the player down. Any challenge where you make contact with the opponent without touching the ball is a direct free kick. If it is in the area, it is a penalty. If it had happened at the other end, England would have expected a penalty. The second penalty was similar but less serious. Ayala clearly tried to avoid making contact with Owen, but the speed of Owen caused Ayala to block his path. If that had happened in the centre circle, a free kick would have been awarded and nobody would have argued. It was in the area, so it was a penalty. Both penalties show that there doesn't have to be intent.

There was a reception for all the referees last night and a number of them will now leave the tournament. Milton Nielsen is one of them, probably because of Denmark's participation in the quarter-finals, and Paul Durkin, my colleague in the FA Carling Premiership, is unfortunately among them, too, suggesting that his performance in the Italy-Austria game did not put him in the top group. Sadly, both the England team and England's referee will be coming home. Referee, by David Elleray, is published by Bloomsbury (£16.99) in August. To reserve your copy call Eel on Cash Sales on 01933 672400.

Durkin ordered off

PAUL DURKIN, the Dorset referee, and Kim Milton Nielsen, the Dane who was in charge of England's defeat against Argentina on Tuesday, are among the 24 officials who will take no further part in the World Cup. Hugh Dallas, of Scotland, is one of ten referees to have been retained. He will take charge of the quarter-final

between Italy and France at the Stade de France tomorrow. Mark Warren, of England, is one of his assistants. QUARTER-FINAL APPOINTMENTS: Italy v France: Referee: H Dallas (SCOT) Assistant: M Warren (ENG), M Englezou (FRA), B Bazi v Denmark: Referee: G Chandler (EGYPT) Assistant: M Marzouk (TUR), O Davis (MAH) Germany v Croatia: Referee: M Platt (ENG) Assistant: M Wilson (SCOT), M van den Broek (BEL) Holland v Argentina: Referee: A Brzoza Carter (MEX) Assistant: O Powell (WAL), E Santos Rostren (HONDURAS).

CRICKET 48

New faces strengthen England's resolve for Test of nerve

SPORT

THURSDAY JULY 2 1998

ROWING 51

Finalist makes early exit on first day of Henley



Unfulfilled potential must not go to waste

In the end, they said they would remember England. Not because of the way their supporters attempted to lay waste to their cities...

was a glorious tapestry of emotions lurking behind that reality. There was a deep, gnawing feeling of regret that this England team that had evolved so quickly in the heat of the World Cup...

Oliver Holt says England should look forward with confidence rather than back in anger after their World Cup disappointment

at Diego Simeone, the Argentina captain, a minute after half-time. England lost their chance of winning the game.

positive. He has to learn from this and maybe this is what he needed to stamp that lack of discipline out of his game.

to think about all the positive things he's done for his country in the past and the future that lies ahead for him with England.

an apology to his team-mates and to the supporters. Hoddle, especially, knew how those fans were feeling. "It has been a bitter pill to take," he said.

They will be without Beckham, though, whose indiscretion on Tuesday means that he is suspended for the first two qualifying games.



The defeat was harder to bear because we were buzzing... I can't remember them creating a chance when we were down to ten

Briton serves notice on Sampras

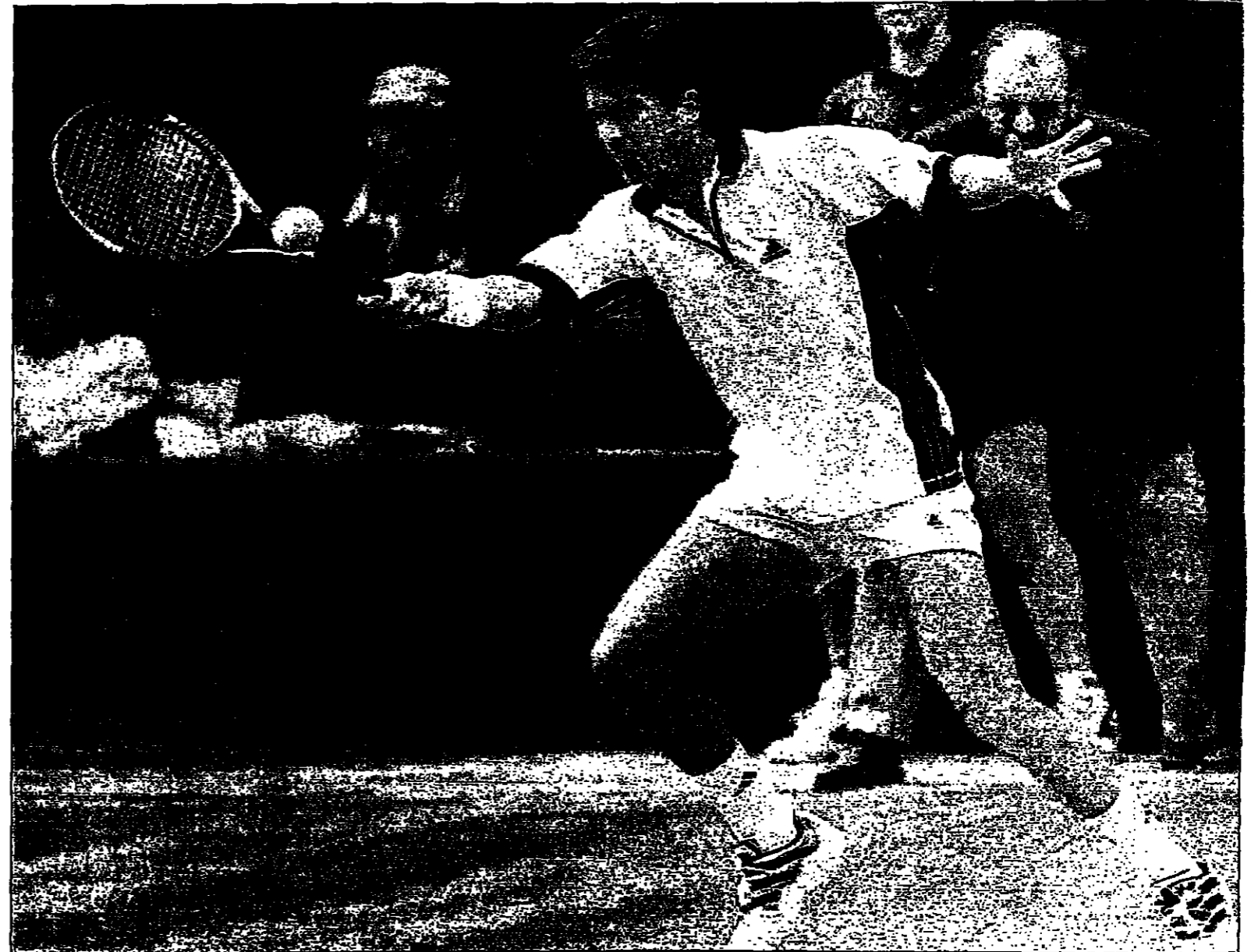
Henman scales rare heights to oust Korda

By Julian Muscat, Tennis Correspondent

TIM HENMAN threatens single-handedly to revive the embers of Great Britain's sporting summer. From the ashes of defeat on foreign fields has risen a man who thrives on home soil.

the opening point. There was never much doubt that Henman would emulate the advance of his compatriot, Roger Taylor, to the last four 25 years ago.

"It will be my toughest test," Henman said. "Sampras is the best grass-court player in the world at the moment. He has come through his matches pretty impressively, but I feel I have a good chance with the way I'm playing."



Henman stretches for a forehand on his way to a straight-sets victory over the No 3 seed yesterday and a place in the Wimbledon semi-finals

Crossword puzzle grid with clues and solutions.

- ACROSS: 1 Supporter (6), 4 Of no effect (4), 9 Plant life: Miles's sister (Turn of Screw) (5), 10 Lowest-form-of-wit practitioner (7), 11 (Eg bishop) nominal (7), 12 Protective garment: airfield surface (5), 13 Jester's insignia (3,3,5), 17 Photo: stamp book (5), 19 Originator: having a stalk (7), 22 Sp. red wine/fruit drink (7), 23 Druid priestess (Bellini op-er) (5), 24 Feed absence of (4), 25 Poach (trout): amuse (6)

Korda's inability to trouble Henman's service was as much down to the Briton's rapier-like delivery. Henman dropped just three points on his service in the opening set, his crisp hitting shattering Korda's desire to "play in" his injured left leg, and Korda's efforts were undermined when, trailing 3-0, he slipped and, in a barely discernible movement, shook his head in the direction of his coach.

ball harder. The move initially undermined him, even embarrassed him into a spate of first-round losses in February and March. It had still not paid off on the eve of Wimbledon and it threatened to evict him from the tournament in the first week.

face of adversity. As against Rafter, Henman never lost control of his action in tight corners. He resembled a bastion of strength on the big occasion.

dismissed the big-serving Australian with ruthless efficiency. The quick start he made in the first-set tie-break left Philippoussis forever chasing a lost cause.



Richard Krajicek, the 1996 champion, en route to a routine quarter-final victory over Davide Sanguinetti

"I couldn't really move the way I needed to," Korda said. "I gave him some trouble, but it was not enough. I played the match because I don't like to give up. He had lots of free points. I felt some pain, but by default would have been the worst thing that could happen to me."

Advertisement for Lexmark high speed colour printer, including text and a photo of the printer.

THE TIMES BOOKSHOP advertisement listing various crossword titles available for purchase.

WIMBLEDON '98 SEMI-FINALS line-up graphic showing player photos and names: P Sampras (US), T Henman (GB), M Hingis (Switz), J Novotna (Cz), G. Ivanisevic (Cro), R Krajicek (Hol), N Zvereva (Bela), N Tauziat (Fr).

مكتبة الأصيل